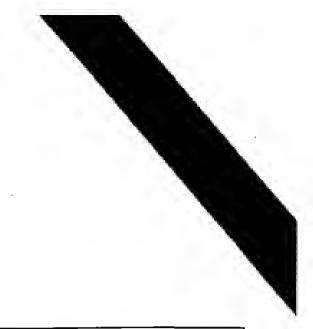
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Five CIS members to abandon pact

MOSCOW (AFP) - Five member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which groups all the former Soviet republics but the three Baltic states, intend to renounce its collective security treaty, the Interfax agency said here Saturday. Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine. and Uzbekistan all plan to abandon the treaty which was signed in May 1992 in Tashkent by nine of the 12 CIS members, the agency said, citing military and

'9 Colombian rebels die in clashes'

BOGOTA (AFP) --- Nine guerrillas died and two policemen were wounded in the latest fighting, Colombian officials said Saturday. Eight rebels died in fighting in the rural zone of Ucenda, according to General Jaime Cortes, commander of the army's third division. Another guerrilla from the leftist National Liberation Army (ELN) was killed during an operation to rescue a landowner held hostage in Aguadas, in the western coffee-growing area of the country. In a separate incident in the northwest region of Antioquia, two policemen were injured when rebels from the country's largest and bestequipped insurgency group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), attacked the village of Convencion.

Mudslide kills 5 in Colombia

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BOGOTA (AFP) -- Five people died and 10 more were injured when heavy rain triggered mudslides in Pereira, a city hit by an earthquake in January, police said Saturday. One of the worst-hit areas was the suburb of Turin, where rescue services managed to save six people. "We felt a great noise and the mountain just came down on top of us," one homeowner who took part in rescue efforts told local radio. The heavy rains of the past week have brought on mudslides in mountainous areas, particularly where cracks in the terrain opened up during January's earthquake, said Ramon Salcedo, head of Pereira's fire ser-

'Mental patients starved in 1940s

STOCKHOLM (R) - About 200 men starved to death at a Swedish mental hospital in 1941-43, the newspaper Dagens Nyheter said on Saturday, calling it another example of practices in Sweden like those used in Nazi Germany. Vipeholm Hospital in Lund was Sweden's only specialised clinic for patients labelled as "difficult to handle idiots," the newspaper said. Hospital records studied by a journalist showed the death rate tripled in 1941, with the increase mainly among those with the lowest intelligence. "The women and those with 'higher standing' were completely unaffected by this epidemic, the newspaper said.

Argentine capital still without power

BUENOS AIRES (R) -- Nearly 60,000 people in the Argentine capital remained without power for a sixth consecutive day on Saturday as electrical distributor Edesur struggled to restore service following a substation fire, a city official said. The fire at an electrical substation on Monday initially left as many as half a million people without power in Buenos Aires. The outage has sparked fierce protests by city residents and leaders. Residents of the Balvanera Sur neighbourhood started fires and threw trash at Edesur's offices on Friday night, demanding electricity.

Jordan's link in worldwide nuclear monitoring system to be upgraded

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — The Ashqouf seismological station, part of a global network monitoring compliance with nuclear nonproliferation efforts, will be surveyed and improved by the end of next year, the head of a nuclear monitoring organisa-

tion said Saturday. Wolfgang Hoffmann, executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO), said the \$250,000 project will include technology transfer, supply and installation of equipment, local personnel training, and software.

Ashqouf is one of 120 seismological stations worldwide that the CTBTO auxiliary network utilises to detect, locate. and measure nuclear explo-

"First we will survey the station, and then we will update it, either this year or next year, depending on the funds available," Hoffmann told a press conference at the Institute of Diplomacy.

His two-day visit, during which he was received by His Majesty King Abdullah, and

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Several people were killed and

wounded in riots that erupted

in Baghdad following the

assassination of a leading

Iraqi Shiite Muslim cleric and

his two sons, CNN reported

Eyewitnesses told the ner-

work that demonstrators

clashed with heavily armed

government forces in Saddam

City, a mainly Shiite suburb in

the north of the Iraqi capital.

journalists from the area.

Iraqi authorities have barred

Iraq denied reports that riots

had erupted in the Baghdad

suburb following the assassi-

nation of the cleric, the offi-

that was broadcast this after-

noon about alleged clashes

between demonstrators and

governmental forces in Bagh-

dad is a disturbing and false

report" INA chief Uday Tai

CNN reported that the secu-

rity presence in the neigh-

bourhood was now "over-

whelming and unprecedent-

ed. There were armed men on

every comer carrying every-

thing from hand guns to

told reporters.

The CNN Breaking News

cial INA news agency said.

held talks with senior officials as well as experts from the Royal Scientific Society and the Natural Resources Authority, was aimed at "discussing the project and taking the practical and legal steps to get started."

Once completed, the CTBTO global network will comprise 321 units, including primary and auxiliary seismological stations, radionuclide stations to monitor the atmosphere, as well as hydroacoustic and infrasound stations.

Around 100 stations have already been built, according to Rashid Qubeisi, director of the CTBTO International Data Centre. Many of them are already operational, but some, such as Ashqouf, need to be upgraded,
"The CTBT is unique with

regard to the global verification network that it [will] provide, with no gaps whatsoever," Hoffmann told reporters.

The CTBTO monitoring network could be completed by 2004. However, that depends on how much money the signatory states are willing to spend," Hoffmann added. Japan, which is the only

assault rifles."

The violence followed the

murder of Ayatollah Moham-

mad Sadek Al Sadr and his

two sons, who were slain

overnight Friday, a govern-

ment spokesman said, quoted

by the official INA news

The agency had previously

The security services man-

aged to arrest some of the

murderers," and are still look-

ing for any others involved,

the information and culture

INA did not specify where

the killing took place. For two

years Avatollah Sadr, aged in

his 60s, had been imam in

Kufa, a town near the south-

em holy city of Najaf. some

160 kilometres south of

The ministry spokesman

accused the assassins of

fornenting sedicion between

the sons of our unified peo-

ple," in a reference to the Shi-

ite and Sunni branches of

An Iran-based Iraqi opposi-

oon group accused Baghdad

of being behind Ayatollah

Baghdad.

ministry spokesman said.

reported the cleric was killed

overnight Thursday.

country to have been attacked with atomic weapons, "contributes for obvious poliocal reasons 20 per cent of our budget, which is \$75 million for 1999." Hoffmann said.

Jordan was one of the first states to sign the 1996 CTBT and is among 29 of the 152 signatory states that have already deposited instruments of ratification before the U.N. secretary general.

The CTBT is a practical

step in the direction of nuclear disarmament, because by forbidding any tests it makes practically impossible to fabricate new armaments," explained Hoffmann.

"Jordan is very supportive and makes a great contribution to the organisation," Hoffmann said, adding that two out of around 100 professionals at the CTBTO are Jordanians.

In the Middle East, the nuclear monitoring network envisages, in addition to Ashqouf station, two seismological stations per country in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Israel: one radionuclide station in Kuwait; three seismological, one radionuclide, and one infrasound station in Iran;

Several reported killed in Iraqi riots

Sadr's murder.

"This new crime is part of a

vast plan by Saddam Hus-

sein's regime to wipe out reli-

gious Shiite dignitaries," a

member of the Supreme

Council for Islamic Revolu-

tion in Iraq (SCIRI) told AFP.

appointed grand ayatollah by

the Iraqi government follow-

ing the death of his predeces-

sor Grand Ayatollah Abul

Kassem Al Khoi in Najaf in

In principle, grand ayatol-

lahs are appointed by their

peers and are considered a

source of religious reference,

wielding significant theologi-

cal and political power among

Ties between Ayatollah

Sadr and the government

soured after he starting calling

six months ago for Shiites to

attend weekly prayers in mosques, while the authori-

ties disapprove of large gath-

Ayatollah Sadr was the

nephew of Grand Ayatollah

Mohammad Bagher Al Sadr,

a religious leader killed in

Shiite make up about half

1979, the opposition said.

the Shiite population.

erings.

Ayatollah Sadr was

after Shiite cleric assassinated

Oman: and one infrasound and one seismological station in Tunisia.

The only states in the region that have not signed the CTBT are Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq.

India and Pakistan, which drew international condemnaoon for their nuclear tests last May, also are not parties to the treaty. But "they both declared their intention to enter the CTBT, and we expect them to do so this year," Hoffmann

"According to the treaty, stations are distributed in a specific configuration that permits the detection of [nuclear explosions] of at least one kilotonne [of magnitude]," Qubeisi told the press confer-

"But [our facilities] are much more sophisticated than that," he added, "and we have already detected events of 0.1 kilotonne [of magnitude]." Hoffmann added.

"Eventually, our data will also serve the study of geological phenomena, such as earthquakes. Science is very interested in our data and will benefit greatly from them."

Iraq's population, concentrat-

ed mainly in the south of the

country. Few of them have a

The Shiite population in the

south and centre of Iraq rose

up in insurrection following

the 1991 Gulf War, but were

put down in a bloody repres-

In January, three people

were killed and several others

wounded after an attacker

hurled a grenade at leading

Shiite cleric Ayatollah Bashir

Hussein Al Bakistani in

Last year two Shiite clerics

were assassinated in Najaf.

which is home to the mau-

soleum of the Imam Ali, son-

in-law of Prophet Moham-

mad and a revered Shiite fig-

Ibrahim, deputy to President

Saddam Hussein, escaped an

assassination attempt in Ker-

bala outside the mausoleum

of the Imam Hussein, son of

Ali and also a revered figure

Thirty-nine people were

arrested in connection with

for Shiite Muslims.

that attack.

November, Ezzat

southern city of Najaf.

role in government.



His Majesty King Abdullah talks to U.S. Army General Henry Shelton, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, at the Royal Palace in Amman on Saturday (Reuters

King receives condolences from U.S. Army general

Abdullah, accompanied by

HRH Prince Hassan, hosted a

lunch in honour of the U.S.

military chairman and his

accompanying delegation.

Attending the lunch were
Their Royal Highnesses

Prince Faisal, Prince Ali and

Prince Hashem, Prime Minis-

ter Fayez Tarawneh. Their

Royal Highnesses Prince Talai

Ben Mohammad, Prince

Ghazi Ben Mohammad, and

Prince Zeid Ben Shaker,

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff Field Marshal Abdul

mad Ababneh, and U.S.

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Abdullah on Saturday received at the Royal Court General Henry Shelton, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, who offered condolences to the King on the passing away of King Hussein. King Abdullah and General Shelton reviewed Jordanian-

U.S. relations and cooperation in military fields, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, which quoted Shelton as saying that the U.S. intends to continue its military aid to the Kingdom and strengthen the defence capacity of the Jordan Armed Forces.

On Friday, President Bill Clinton asked Congress to approve \$300 million in extra will be used to modernise Jordan's military.

After the meeting, King

Hafez Mira'i Kaabneh, General Intelligence Department Director General Samih Battikhi, Royal Air Force Chief of Staff Major General Moham-

William Burns. Shelton, who arrived in Amman on Friday and is due

in Riyadh for talks with his Saudi counterpart and to visit U.S. forces stationed in the kingdom, also met vesterday with Kaabneh for discussions on bilateral military coopera-

Also Saturday, King Abdullah received at Raghadan Palace former Lebanese Prime Minister Amin Hafez, who offered his condolences to the

King Abdullah received a king of Bhutan, who also congratulated him on assuming his constitutional duties as King of Jordan.

Another cable of condolences was received from Abdul Aziz Ben Othman the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisa-

King briefed on government's efforts to encourage investment

Majesty King Abdullah on Satorday headed a meeting with the government's economic team, during which he was briefed by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on the government's efforts to encourage investment and promote economic growth.

At the meeting, which was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal, Prince Ali and Prince Talal Ben Mohammad as well as Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani, Tarawneh briefed King Abdullah on the government's current contacts with a number of countries to

promote economic cooperation and increase trade exchanges. The King issued directives to intensify efforts to boost Arab and foreign investments in the Kingdom.

Participants at the meeting agreed to develop a mechanism and form a government body to encourage local and foreign investment.

"We understand the competioon is very strong around us. and therefore we have to work very quickly to promote our projects and to facilitate the required legal procedures," Tarawneh said after the meet-

importance of safeguarding the rights of all employees working in firms that the government plans to privatise, The King praised the govern-

ment's efforts to provide facilities to citizens in all parts of the Kingdom and emphasised the importance of improving economic performance in order to create more job opportunities and combat unemployment.

A number of ministers as well as the Central Bank governor briefed the King on current projects and financial policies as well as the privatisation programme.

Kosovo autonomy accord deadline extended three days

RAMBOUILLET(R) -- The major power Contact Group on Saturday extended the deadline for a Kosovo peace accord until Tuesday after Serbs and ethnic Albanians neared a poliocal deal but Belgrade continued to oppose a NATO role in policing it.

By the original noon (1100 GMT) deadline, both delegations fell short of totally agreeing with the plan, drafted by the six-nation Contact Group, that would establish ethnic Albanian autonomy in the Serbian province, French officials

French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine told a press conference at Rambouillet castle outside Paris that both sides now had until 1400 GMT on Tuesday to agree to the peace plan in order to avert NATO strikes on Serbia.

Vedrine said that the deadline was extended because "very substantial progress has been made on reaching agreement on the framework and political



Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and unidentified negotiators talk during the last Contact Group meeting at the Rambouillet on Saturday (AFP photo)

chapters [of] the [three-year] interim agreement."

But he said Belgrade was putting up the biggest resis-tance to the accord by object-

ing to the West's demand for a

NATO peacekeeping force to implement it on the ground. "It is still the Yugoslav delegation which refuses to take the decisions which seem indispensable to us. "Until the whole deal is

agreed, no part of the deal can be agreed," he said, adding that what the Contact Group was asking of Belgrade "demands sacrifices." NATO had threatened to

bomb Serbian targets if Belgrade was held responsible for blocking a final agreement. But diplomats said the results of the Rambouillet talks so far were not clear-cut and there was scope for further negotiation.

Earlier in the day, a European diplomat had said that the ethnic Albanian delegation was still holding out for a referendum on self-determination after three years of autonomy and had not budged.

"They are being very sticky," he said.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the Serbs bore the "lion's share" of blame for obstacles to an

But she said she believed

remaining disputes could be overcome and had no plans to fly to Belgrade for any lastditch talks with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

"Let me stress that we expect nothing less than a complete interim agreement including Belgrade's acceptance of a NATO-led force...," she told the news conference.

"Until the parties have accepted all provisions of the agreement, preparations for NATO military action will continue. And if that agreement is not confirmed by Tuesday, [NATO] Secretary General [Javier] Solana will draw the appropriate conclusions."

Some 430 NATO warplanes - including 260 U.S. jets were on alert for possible strikes against Yugoslavia.

A senior U.S. official earlier accused the Serbs of refusing to engage seriously on military issues. But other diplomats said a formula might be found allowing a neutrally named NATO-led force under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council. Far from the Byzantine

diplomacy inside Rambouillet's 14th-century French chateau, fighting flared anew in Kosovo on Saturday when Serbian security forces shelled an ethnic Albanian village, sending hundreds of inhabitants

Groups of Kosovo Liberaoon Army (KLA) guerrillas took cover as Serbian army and police units pummelled the village southwest of the provincial capital Pristina, with heavy mortar rounds and machineguns, witnesses and journalists at the scene said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties.

International monitors had reported heightened Serbian military movements on Friday and a heavy exchange of fire on Saturday with KLA guerrillas, who are fighting for independence for Kosovo and have representatives at the peace

In Rambouillet, Serbian sources said they were ready to sign the political document on autonomy but an international military presence was unacceptable unless Yugoslavia as a sovereign state invited NATO and Russia to send troops.

"The Russians are 100 per cent behind our delegation in opposing any military deal. Some of the Europeans also have reservations," the source said as Serbian Republic President Milan Milutinovic continued talks with Western minis-

U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin insisted there could be no separation of the political and military aspects of an accord. NATO wants to uphold any accord with 28,000 soldiers.

Underlining the gravity of the situation. Western governments began evacuating diplomats, aid workers and their families from Serbia, the main republic in federal Yugoslavia.

say it's displeased about sanctions shop open on the Sabbath

UNITED NATIONS (AP) - Libya has made some "preliminary observations" on a letter from Secretary General Kofi Annan outlining assurances if two Libyan suspects are handed over for trial in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet, a U.N. spokesman said.

Libya's U.N. Ambassador Abuzed Omar Dorda presented the observations "orally and informally" to a senior U.N. official. said spokesman Fred Eckhard. "We are now studying

those." He disclosed Libya's initial reaction to Annan's letter, which was sent Wednesday, when asked about a report in Friday's Arabic-language daily Al Hayat. It quoted diplomats as saying Libya was not pleased because the letter didn't contain clear-cut assurances of lifting sanctions if the men are handed

The Security Council has pledged to suspend sanctions against Libya as soon as the suspects arrive for trial in the Netherlands. The sanctions include a ban on air travel. the freezing of some Libyan assets overseas, restrictions

Libya wants sanctions lifted - not just suspended when the men are turned

on diplomatic personnel, and

a ban on the purchase of oil

equipment

But under a 1992 resolution imposing sanctions, the council said they will remain until Libya cooperates fully in establishing responsibility for the bombing and until the Lioyan government commits itself "definitively to cease all forms of terrorist action and all assistance to terrorist groups." Libya must also "demonstrate its renuncia-

A 1993 resolution says that after sanctions are suspended, the secretary general must report to the council within 90 days on whether Libya has complied with these provisions before the measures can be lifted alto-

In August, Libya accepted in principle the U.S.-British proposal for a trial in the Netherlands under Scottish law because the plane exploded over Lockerbie. Scotland. Libya balked, however, at the prospect that the suspects, if convicted, would be imprisoned in Scotland. It also wanted sanctions lifted.

Reports last weekend from South African and Saudi Arabian officials mediating on bebalf of the United Nations indicated that a trial deal could be imminent. While the letter from

Annan has not been made public, families of some of the 270 people killed in the crasb have been told that it says the men won't be questioned about issues unrelated to the trial - and that the goal of the trial is not to undermine the Libyan Susan Cohen of Cape May.

New Jersey, whose 20-year-old daughter died in the crash, said in a statement Friday that severe limitations on the trial will make conviction of the two suspects "much more difficult and perhaps impossible." Cohen, who believes Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi masterminded the bombing, said the proposal represents "a crude betrayal" for victims families hoping to learn the

truth about the bombing that

killed their loved ones "and a

cynical victory for their

Libya answers Annan letter, reports | Ultra-Orthodox Jews protest

(AP) - the battle between Jerusalem's secular and religious Jews spread to a new front Saturday: A downtown supermarket, the first in a Jewisb neighbourbood to be open on the Sabbath.

A dozen ultra-Orthodox Jews crowded around "drugstore 2000" at the top of the popular Ben Yehuda Pedestrian mall, shouting, "Sabbath!" at one point, a fistfight broke out between two demonstrators and one of the store's owners. Moshe Abergil. Police pulled them apart. The time has come to

break the ultra-Orthodox grip" on Jerusalem, Abergil said, as a black batted ultra-Orthodox man chanted "Sabbath" and tried to enter the store.

"Sabbath is outside," Abergil said, blocking his way. Under Jewish law, all work and commercial activity is banned from sundown. Friday to sundown Saturday and shops in Israel close during the biblically mandated day of rest.

About 100 restaurants,

convenience stores, and clubs are open on the Sabbath in the traditionally Jewish western part of the city, but drugstore 2000, which opened Friday, is the first supermarket, with wide aisles featuring vegetables. bread, flowers and liquor, to remain open on the Sabbath. Zeev, a 22 year-old semi-

nary student, said the 24bour store eroded the Jewish character of Jerusalem. "Everything in Jerusalem

now doubt his chances of suc-

Exasperated by the wave of

attacks, Hoss admitted last

Sunday that his government of

already made "major" mis-

takes, but he lashed out at crit-

ics he said had not even

accorded his administration the

traditional 100-day grace peri-

"Although we stressed from

the very beginning the heavy

financial, economic and

administrative burden we

have a magic wand, our cabi-



entering his store Saturday. A handful of ultra-Orthodox Jews protested outside the shop when it opened its doors on the Jewish Sabbath, and some tried to enter to persuade shoppers to leave. Policemen guarded the store during the day, fearing it would become the latest flashpoint in the struggle between secular and religious Jews in Israel (Reuters photo) admitted. "We only came to

wing politicians, streamed

has always been closed," he said, declining to give his last name. 'It is forbidden to be open on the Sabbath." The battle between secu-

lar and observant Jews over the role of religion in daily life has intensified in recent years. About 70 per cent of Jews in Israel are secular. Last month, ultra-Ortho-

dox demonstrators threw garbage at customers of a trendy cafe to protest it being open on the Sabbath. Throughout the day, secu-lar Israelis, including left-

Lebanese govt bogged down in political quagmire

into the store, some to sneak a peak, some to make a political statement, and some just to pick up a loaf of bread. Dozens milled around the store's entrance. arguing with the ultra-Orthodox demonstrators about the role of religion.

A 55-year-old mother of four wbo introduced herself only as Yael tossed a package of pasta and a jar of sweet-and-sour sauce into ber basket, "We didn't realneed anything," sbe

show support." Abergil. who also owns a small round-the-clock convenience store in Jerusalem's secular Talpiot neighbourhood, said that he was not worned about the protest-

"I have the right to live my life without them imposing on me," be said. Inspectors from the Labour ministry arrived Saturday and fined Abergil 500 shekels (\$120) for employing Jews on the Sabbath.

Britons challenge doctor's testimony at Yemen trial

ADEN (R) — Five British Muslims on trial in Yemen challenged a report by a government doctor who had examined them and insisted in court on Saturday that they had not been tortured.

The five, among six suspected Islamists, told the court they were bung upside-down and beaten on the soles of their feet. Dr. Fouad Al Qahiri on Tuesday had told the court in Aden that be had examined the five on Jan. 15 while they were still under interrogation. He said be found bruises

from handeuffs but that he did not find any evidence supporting defence claims that they were tor-

It was not clear if the sixth suspect, an Algerian

with a French passport which French officials say is forged, had been examined by a doctor or

Defence lawyers had asked the court to dismiss charges against the suspects of plotting terrorist activity in Yemen on the grounds that their confessions were taken by force.

The defence bad previously challenged the testimony by Qahiri, a pbysician who works at a government hospital in Yemen's southern city of said Qahiri's

examination was not thorough and that he did not record the exact time of the examination. The court presented the

suspects with their bandwritten confessions the prosecution said they had made during interroga-

The suspects confirmed to the court that the documents were in their own handwriting but said they were incomplete and that the written confessions had been taken under tor-

Four other suspects, including three British Muslims of Egyptian or Pakistani origin and one of Algerian origin, are also on trial on the same charges. They were arrested and charged after the trial of the first six The court adjourned

until Feb. 23. All six men have plead-

ed not guilty to charges of forming an "armed gang to carry out a criminal plan to threaten the security of Yemen and carry

killing, sabotage and bombings." They are also weapons. The prosecution says all

out terrorist acts of

six defendants are linked to Abu Hamza Al Masri, head of the London-based Supporters of Sharia (Islamic law) group, and to Abu Hassan, the selfconfessed leader of the kidnappers of 16 Western tourists in December.

Four of the tourists three Britons and an Australian -- were killed when security forces stormed the hideout.

Yemen wants Britain to hand over Masri, but British officials say they bave received no formal extradition request.

Iraq says it repulsed ground attack from Iran

visited southern Iraq on Dec.

DUBAI (AFP) - Iraq claimed on Saturday it had repulsed a ground attack by opposition forces from Iranian territory during the U.S.-British air war in December:

Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan said in an interview with the United Arab Emirates' Al Khaleej daily that Iraqi opposition troops entered the south of Iraq on Dec. 18, the second day of missile strikes.

He said the plan was for "the Americans and British to lead intensive aerial raids and under this cover, ground troops supposedly from the opposition were to enter Iraqi soil, because the Americans did not want to sacrifice their soldiers," Ramadan said.

On the first day of the aggression, they attacked all the vital installations to isolate the south from the centre: communications, television and radio," he said. "On the second day, U.S. planes dropped notes to the army, telling the soldiers; If you don't fight against civilians, we will not attack you," because they expected civilian demonstrations," he added.

Those who call themselves the Islamic opposition entered from Iran. When they crossed the border, some gave them-

selves up when they saw the security situation, some fled and others were killed," Ramadan said.

He said the Iraqi authorities "taken precautions because we knew they would try to carry out this plan through those who have lived far from Iraq for years," he

a similar plan to infiltrate towards "Mosul, Kirkuk and other towns."

But he did not say if there had actually been troop incur-

sions. An AFP photographer

Ramadan also said there was

troops into northern Iraq,

20. He reported it looked like a military base, with heavy concentrations of soldiers and anned tribesmen in and around the southern port city of Basra. The road leading into Basra

was lined with heavy doublebarrelled machine-guns and inherited and said we did not the armed tribesmen, called in by President Saddam to help net has been put under the defend the city. microscope and is regarded as Washington in October drew

incapable just two months after up the Iraqi liberation act proit was put together," he told viding \$97 million in military reporters. aid to Iraqi opposition groups He said his government had as part of its efforts to oust Sadmade two major errors --"halting the purges [of admin-

ernment of Lebanese Prime were complete and making Minister Salim Hoss, who took appointments that were not office last December, has been so beset by criticism that many

After taking power in December, Hoss immediately embarked on a reform of the administration, sacking a number of top officials, particularly those close to former Prime But bowing to pressure from politicians eager to keep their

ability to reward followers with public positions, the goverament froze the reform program after sacking 23 out of the administration's 72 top civil servants.

The sacked officials were mostly close allies of Hariri, former President Elias Hrawi and Druze leader Walid Jum-But Hoss then came under

fire for stopping short of taking similar action against the some of the most powerful associates of Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a staunch ally of powerful neighbour Syria.

...(02) 7101372, (02) 7103101

..(02) 7102831, (02) 7102011

Hospital

Hospital

Sisters

Speciality Hospital(02) 7103100

Haya

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT

This information is supplied by

Royal Jordanian (RJ) information

department at the Queen Alia

AQABA:

(03)20141)1

Princess

to Hoss, rivalries within the government have even recently been spiashed on newspaper front-pages. Agriculture Minister Sulciman Franjieh. one of the leading pro-Syrian Christian figures, recently publicly called Minister of Administrative Reforms Hassan Shalak The bumpy administrative

In a further embarrassment

reform programme had initially been based on reports drafted by Shalak who chaired the Council of Civil Servants before becoming a government minister. Close former allies of Hoss have also joined their voices to

the growing uproar over the new government's perfor-'I have too rapidly granted

my support to the government," former prime minister and northern Lebanon MP Omar Karameh said last week. accusing Hoss of neglecting Karameh's constituency, the main northern port city of

Lahoud called on Hoss to "correct his mistakes." while another Hoss ally MP Boutros Harb called on the prime minister not to follow Hariri's policies." "If we intend to follow the same financial policy, it would have been better for Hariri to carry it out himself because he is better qualified to do it." Harb said, referring to recent plans to launch a new Eurobond issue in an attempt to widen investor interest.

In spite of the attacks, Hoss has denied he intends to resign.

09:35Frankfurt (RJ)

09:55Graz. Rome (RJ)

10:30Graz, Athens (RJ)

10:50Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)

11:25 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

12:15London (RJ)

20:25Cairo (RJ)

20:30Jeddah (RJ)

20:35New Delhi (RJ)

21:00Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

00:10 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

07:10Frankfurt (LH)

21:10Tel Aviv (LY)

21:40 _____Cairo (MS)

00:35.....Amsterdam (KL)

01:55Bucharest (RO)

03:00Rome (AZ)

Bangkok (RJ)

....Damascus (RJ)

...5anaa (RJ)

.....Aden (TY)

Jstanbul (TK)

...Kiev (6U)

.Beirut (ME)

20:45

22:45

Other Flights

19;40

22:30

15:35

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel. 4773111-19 PROGRAMME TWO Thursday/Friday Programmes

...News headlines

19:35Doc - Perspective
20:00 News in Arabic (Channel
2 links up with channel 1)
20:30 Programme on the late
His Majesty King Hussein 21:00 Islamic History in Jordan
21:00 Islamic History in Jordan
21:30On the Banks of Jordan
22:00News in English
22:10 Duc National Geographic
22:10 Doc National Geographic 23:00 News in Arabic (Channel
2 links up with channel 1)

PRAYER TIMES

	04:51	Fajr
	06:09	tSunrise) Duha
1	11:49	Dhuhr
	15:00	'Asrl
	17:30	Maghreb
ļ	18:47	Maghreb
ı		

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 5920740 4622366 Anglican

Assemblies of God Church Tel. St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590 Terra Sancta Church Tel. Church Tel. 4624853/4624811. St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox

Amman International Church

Church Tel. 4771751.

Tel. 5865897

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR Congregation Tel. 5688404 The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932 St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757 Church of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church Tel.

Church of Presentation. Swei-Geh Tel. 5920146 The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190 Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679 The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 477 [33] The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Cold weather conditions will prevail, skies partly cloudy, and winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

..03/1010/19 Agaba01/12 Jordan Valley09/18

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 08 Aqaba 18. Humidity readings: Amman 67 per cent, Agaba 40 per cent.

Following are the tempreatures expected today in the following

Ailoun Petra03/13

USEFUL TEĽĔPHŎŊE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY

AMMIAN: Dr. Mukhles Mazahrah ___5150312 Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyim.4620115

Firas Pharmacy5661912

Al Salam Pharmacy 4636730

Mayadah Pharmacy ...5537004

Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy 5536169

Dr. Issam Salih(02)346858 Fnu'ad Pharmacy .(02),775360

ZARQA: Dr. Mazen Saffarini (05)985832 Palestine Pharmacy..(05)983562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111
Civil Defence Department _5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Res-
cue4630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade
Blood Bank4775121
Highway Police5343402
Traffic Police4896390
Public Security Dept4630321
Hotel Complaints5605800
Price Complains5661176
Water & Sewenge Complaints4897467
Arrenan Municipality Com-
plaints787111
Telephone Information (directo-
reseptions unomisation (cursons
ry assistance)121
Overseas Calls0132
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101
Jordan Television4773111

Water Authority5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co... _...4636381

RJ Flight Information..44-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport ...44-53200

HOSPITALS

The Arab Centre for Heart and Spe-

GovL Hospital (09)983323 National Hospital _(09)900560 Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986731

Princess Basma(02)275555 __(02)272275

CIT 2018 A
The Islamic, Abdli5666131/7
Hussein Medical Centre 5856856
Luzmila
Khalidi Maternity4644281/6
Akileh Maternity 4642441/2
Johal Amman Maternity_4642362
Malhas, J. Amman4636(40
Palestine, Shmeisani5607071
Shmeisani Hospital5607431
Jordan Hospital5607550
University Hospital5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali5664164/6
Italian Al-Muhaireen 4777101/3
Al-Bashir 4775111/26
Army, Markn4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 5157100

Al Hikma Modern Hospital

..(09)990990 Hospital Catholic Hospital Al Nafees Hospital

International Airport (44)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (44) 52700 or (44) 523250, Information on Royal Wings flights can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

David Tandanian (D.D. Divita-
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15
08:00Jeddah (RJ
08:25Bombay (RJ
08:50 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ
09:00Beirut (RJ
09:50Dubai. Abu Dhabi (RJ
16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:40Paris (RJ
17:45London (RJ

19:40 ____Frankfun (RJ) 20:15Athens (RJ) 20:25Rome (RI) 22:55Vienna. Aqaba (RJ) 23:59Cairo (RJ)

12:30	Aden (TY)
14:35	Istanbul (TK)
18:00Dubo	i. Damascus (EK)
18:40	Beirut (ME)
18:45	Kiev (6U)
19:05	Paris (AF)
20:25	Tel Aviv (LY)
20-40	
27:25 Landon	2. Damascus (BA)
23.25	L Damascus (BA)
A3:35	Amsterdam (KL)
24:55	Lamaca(CY)
00:55	Bucharest (RO)
02:00	Rome (AZ)

Other Flights

Royal Wings (RW) Flights 07:50 Agaba (arriving at QAIA) 10:30 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA)

16:00. Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW) 17:45 Haifa (arriving at QAIA) 18:45 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights 05:00 .Aqaba Paris (add) (RJ) The influential MP Nassib

The government, in a late session on Wednesday, entrusted the minister of administrative reform to "draft a report on the mistakes made in previous appointments and dismissals of

The leading Al Nahar newspaper suggested the government may be given a "second chance" after acknowledging

..Beirut (RJ)

By Caroline Faraj

Service Secrety, Interest Services Development of Secrety Control Cont

per cent o

DEF fours were existing loans to loans

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Amas .. senior programma

According to Director

of Research and Plannin

a DEF. Rad: Eroum. "the

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City of UNDP

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Home

aids accident

victims

treated

DEF pro

MMAN - Proposed toll of at the Proper Hashemin foundaries with the review-the diet and for with thousand d header-in streaming ! the Palace every day to vis

the tomb of the late Kin He san and he sign a conde part registers Official, and the office he also been to giving service of from visign touns, who is and familie temporary mass visits to d state of Fig. Materay, while ded after a see attenuants be de with concer on Feb.7 ar has late to real telleraing

and timeral, a day after. Meny of the visitors flood ing in the grave are Palestin the from the Mest Bank as fina Strip and Israels Arab प्रमान वाद अग्रहसम्बद्ध क स्मा**ल क**

Royal Wings (RW) Flights 08:15 Tel Aviv (arriving from QAIA) (RW) 08:30 Agaba (from Marka Airporti (RW) 14:30 Harfa (from Marka Air-

Port) (RW) 16:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport(RW) 20:30 _Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

power posting of smoticals home and abroad. However, Protocol office aid in private they have passed the challenge of he fing to arrange for the is ing funeral which w

person a large Earpeants

hames to Amman to pe homage to the late King, d gown, panalest seas in tank Il baface them were take of hour a day people work pulting the first section and holocol officer. What A the contraction is an ante



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Car.

Princess aids accident victims

SWEIMEH (Petra) -Eleven people were injured in a four car pileup in the Jordan Valley yesterday.

One of the vehicles was a rented car carrying a family from the Palestioian self-rule areas. The other three cars carried passengers from Jordan, according to eyewitnėsses.

The accident occurred in the Sweimeh area of the valley. HRH Princess Basma, who was passing in the same area when the accident occurred, stopped to offer assistance and arrange for the victims to he transported to South Shuneh Hospital. Most of the victims were released after being treated. Those injured from the PNA areas in the rented vehicle were referred to Al Bashir Hospital in

And now the weather: Colder and drier

AMMAN (J. T.) - Cold and partly cloudy weather was forecast for today with temperatures expected to rise to a maximum of 10°C during the day, dropping to 3°C at night, with no more rain expected for the coming two days, meteorologists said Sanrday.

The Department of Meteorology has cautioned motorists against slippery roads. Officials also said that frost formation in the badia and high mountains would cause patches in some areas and render visibility poor.

Rainfall over most regions of the country in the past two days has helped to partly replenish the Kingdom's

Dhafer Alem, deputy secretary general of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the reservoirs behind the dams collected 4.5 million cubic metres of rain water by 9:00 a. m. Saturday, and he expected an additional 3 million by the end of Saturday.

Alem said King Talal Dam, the largest in the country with a capacity of 75 million cubic metres, now holds 46 million cubic metres, while Wadi Arab Dam holds 11 mcm and



An empty lot flooded by rainwater near University Road yesterday (photo by Yousef 'Allan)

Alem said the JVA will not allow water behind the dams to flow into the farmlands of the valley for the time being.

According to Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha, the recent rains have saved the current agricultural season, but because the rains were late pasture lands, especially those located in the eastern badia regions of the Kingdom. received no benefit from the

Khreish said the country

has sustained JDI50 million in losses due to the drought that preceded the rainfall.

He said a ministry team charged with estimating losses from the drought will submit a report on the simulation to the ministry. Facts from the report will be presented to the World Food Programme in the hope of securing compensation and assistance for the ministry to deal with the problem.

Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid said after a tour of different

15 per cent officially and

30 per cent independently.

As in other lending insti-

tutions in Jordan, DEF

reflects a low percentage

of female horrowers. This

can be attributed to the

fact that women do oot

have enough guarantors to

support their application

for loans, as any loan

requires a guarantor or

The study revealed that

these loans had positive

socio-economic results oo

geoder and the chaoging

"Of the financed pro-

jects only 32 per cent of

them went to females,"

He pointed out that DEF

was going to sign an

agreement with the Gener-

Federation of Jordanian

We are now cooperat-

"New approaches should

ing with many NGOs who

have women as their target

he adopted towards the

gender mainstreaming of

projects and gender impact at the heneficiary

At the heneficiary level

it was found that loan

recipients had had no

training, and had not been

given any husiness sup-

port. They had not even

group," Etoum said,

level," Amawi said.

Womeo for a JD1 million

loan to finance women's

roles within the family.

collateral.

Etoum said.

projects only.

districts of Amman that there were no reports of accidents or flooding of homes as a result of the the heavy rains.

He said municipality teams have been at work around the clock to ensure that culverts and manholes were function-

ing properly.

Hadid said no rain-related incidents were reported to the municipality's central operations room which was on call for emergencies around the

col. Iraq was to supply the

'Iraq is keen to boost trade with Jordan' — Saleh

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN - Visitiog Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh said Saturday that his country was keen to boost trade with Jordan despite the recent reduction in trade volume between the two countries.

Saleh, who was addressing Jordanian industrialists during a meeting at the Amman Chamber of Industry, also said that his country was considering increasing its imports of Jordanian-made vegetable oil, io line with the oil for food agreement it signed

The relations between Jordan and Iraq are strategic and solid. Iraq will always remain supportive of the Kingdom through an expansion of cooperation. Iraq will spare oo efforts to boost these ties," Saleh

with the United Nations.

In December, Jordan and Iraq agreed to cut the \$255 million trade protocol between the countries by \$65 million, following the decline in oil prices on world markets.

According to the proto-

Kingdom with its oil needs at preferential rates in exchange for food, medicine and other necessary items for its 23 million peo-

The deal is exempted from the 1990 U.N. sanctioos, imposed following the Iraqi invasion of

Kuwait. Saleh urged the U.N. to activate Article 50 of its charter which stipulates that any country that is affected by sanctions on another country is permitted not to comply with these sanctions. He noted that Turkey was the only country to benefit from this particular article.

Saleh accused a U.N. commission of hindering trade contracts between Iraq and other countries.

According to the December 1997 oil-for-food agreement, Iraq is allowed to export \$2 billion worth of oil in exchange for food and medicine. The volume was since increased to \$5.2 hillion.

But any contracts made between Iraq and other countries are subject to U.N. approval. Iraq has always accused the United Nations of delaying these

cootracts. The sanctions have cost Iraq more than \$140 hillion, Saleh pointed out,

mostly incurred because of

the han on oil exports. The minister, who arrived here from Sudan en route to Baghdad after a tour that included Egypt, also met with his Jordanian counterpart Mohammad Saleh

Hourani. The two officials agreed to hold a meeting of the Higher Committee in Baghdad late this month. The meeting was scheduled to take place earlier this month hut postponed due to the death of His Majesty King Hussein.

The two countries are expected to sign the trade protocol for this year, which was concluded during a visit by a Jordanian delegation to the lraqi capital in December.

During his meeting with Hourani, Saleh expressed his country's condolences over the death of His Majesty King Hussein. Iraq was represented by vice president Taha Muhieddine Ma'arouf at the funeral of King Hussein.

'DEF projects create job opportunities' — study

By Hind-Lara Mango

AMMAN - The Ministry of Social Development is currently launching a comprehensive review of all micro-finance and lending institutions in the Kingdom to assess how effective they have been in reaching their target

One such initiative tackled under the Social Productivity Programme Task Force on Micro-finance, was the analysis of the effectiveness of the Development and Employment Fund (DEF). In a study, coosidered to be the first of its kind in the regioo, the socioeconomic impact of DEF-fuoded projects was analysed at the heneficiary level by the Royal Scientific Society, the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

and DEF. "The study concluded that only 50 per cent of DEF loans were existing loans, the rest were nonexisting or loans in default, particularly agricultural loans," said Ahla Amawi, senior programme officer at UNDP.

According to Director of Research and Planning at DEF, Radi Etoum, "this does not mean that DEF did not reach its target group of the poor and unemployed." He said study findings showed that 50 per cent of DEF beneficiaries had gaioed an income of above JD200 a

month from these projects.
"Study findings indicate that DEF projects are lahour-intensive with each project providing an average of three joh opportuni-ties," Etoum told the Jordan Times.

He explained that since in most cases agricultural projects were defaultiog. the DEF hoard of directors had decided to shift agricultural credit to the Agricultural Credit Corpora-

The study indicated ia problem in the management, utilisation and targeting of loans.

Responding to study recommendations, DEF began a restructuring programme this mooth. "We have launched new

strategies pertaining to

loan conditions and interest rates," Etoum said. DEF is a development financing institution. which has spent JD23 million on approximately six thousand projects during the 10 years it has been in existence. It aims to alleviate the adverse effects of structural adjustment pro-

grammes. The fund strives to enable poor, low-income and unemployed individuthrough direct and iodirect loans, rehabilitation, and technical assistance.

The study recommended that DEF raise its interest rate to cover its operatiooal costs.

"We have drawn up new lending strategies. For example, the interest rate for direct loans has been increased to 9 per ceot annually for the ioitiation of projects," Etoum said. The most debated issue

io the micro-fioance sector in Jordan has been the increase in interest rates to cover cost. Since DEF previously charged an interest rate way below the commercial rate, and it is a poverty alleviation programme, it should work through NGOs and focus 00 iodirect leoding to achieve cost recovery.'

Amawi said. In a recent interview with the Jordan Times, Amawi said: "We proposed indirect lending rather than direct lending as the latter involves large-scale operating requirements: restructuring of the management and lending programme to adopt a best practices approach in terms of outreach, sustainability, and

cost recovery." According to official estimates, unemployment in the country stands at 16 per cent, an independent als and families to start

put the rate at close to 27 conducted feasibility studper cent. Poverty raies are ies for their projects.

"There was no real follow-up. DEF does not have the capacity to follow up on every single project they finance," Amawi said. • According to Etoum.

DEF is currently working oo "separate collection and follow-up units so that follow-up activities will focus on diagnosing prohlems and on rendering technical assistance to overcome them."

Beneficiaries usually go through a lengthy hureaucratic process when requesting a loan from DEF. But Amawi said, This can be fixed, the hasic problem was that DEF could not cover its

operation costs." By the same token it was noted that some of the NGOs handliog DEF loans did not achieve total cost recovery at the end of the day as they faced the same sort of obstacles witnessed by DEF in term of

sustainability. When we restructure this sector as a whole, all these issues have to be tackled simultaneously,"

said Amawi. She said, "Attempts are now heing made at restructuring the entire sector in terms of microfinance practices in Jor-

Proposed King Hussein memorial award to reward humanitarian/scientific efforts

By Susan Resheq

AMMAN — The Greater Municipality of Amman is considering offering a \$100,000 annual memorial award for scientific and humanitarian achievements in memory of His Majesty King Hussein, said Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid.

The proposed award, enti-tled 'The Hussein Creative Scientific and Humanitarian Award," would be open to applicants from Jordan and other Arab countries, the

mayor said. He said the final rules and

Mamser appointed acting minister of culture

AMMAN (Petra) - A Royal Decree was issued on Saturday appointing Mohammad Kheir Mamser as acting minister of culture and youth during the absence of Minister of Culture and Youth Talal Sata'an Al Hassan who led a Jordanian delegation to the Algiers meetings for ministers

WFP donates 8,000 tonnes of wheat

of youth.

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Food Programme (WFP) has agreed to donate

8000 tonnes of wheat to the

fields of interest of the award have not yet been determined, but its establishment will occur within the 40 days of the passing away of King Hussein.

Hadid said the award would be granted in one of two categories: 1) for achievements in the literary, scientific or Arab city fields, or 2) for achievements in the literary or Arab cities areas.

The field covering Arab cities will, in turn, be divided into three branches.

Awards granted for the best and most beautiful building erected in an Arab city; prizes granted for the best planning for an Arab city; and awards granted for the best environmental achievement.

"An Arab committee will be formed to supervise the awards activity; the committee will include well-known Arab personalities, respected at both the national and international levels," Hadid said.

Hussein Hamouri, public relations manager at the Greater Amman Municipality said details of the prize will be announced as soon as the municipality council completes its study of the awards'

rules and fields.

production and found positive

farmers with compensation in

the form of food and through

soft long-term loans to stock

Cultural cancellations

response from IFAD and Kingdom in 1999 as direct readiness to help Jordan overdrought through providing

ers, according to Hashem Shboul, the agriculture ministry's secretary general, yesterday. Speaking upon his return to Amman from a WFP meeting held in Rome between Feb.15 and 18, Shboul said the decision was taken after the Jordanian delegation had presented a general report about the agricultural sector in Jordan and obstacles obstructing cooperation between Jordan and the

International Fund for Agri-

cultural development (IFAD).

Shboul said discusions were

held with IFAD over plans to

help Jordan increase its food

The following cultural centres in Amman have suspended all

cultural activities for the month of February: French Cultural Centre

Goethe Institute

Instituto Cervantes

The British Council

Royal Protocol: Tireless officers behind the scenes

By Caroline Faraj

AMMAN - Protocol officers at the Royal Hashemite Court are working round-theclock to cope with thousands of Jordanians streaming to the Palace every day to visit the 10mb of the late King Hussein and to sign a condolence register.

Officials said the office has also been receiving scores of requests from visiting lourists, schools and families to organise mass visits to the grave of His Majesty, who died after a seven-month battle with cancer on Feb.7 and was laid to rest following a state funeral, a day after.

Many of the visitors flocking to the grave are Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Israeli Arabs who are making a one-day iourney to Amman to pay homage to the late King, the region's longest serving ruler. "If palace doors were open

24 hours a day, people would still line up to get in, said a protocol officer. "What we are experiencing is an amazing outpouring of emotions at home and abroad." However, protocol officials said in private they have

passed the challenge of hav-

ing to arrange for the late

King's funeral, which wit-

nessed a rare gathering of

world leaders.

The challenge was to set aside our state of shock, to arrange for the funeral in less than 24 hours and to meet the needs of an unexpected flow of world leaders who wanted to be here to hid a final farewell to a great leader and human," added the official, who requested anonymity.

Chief of Royal Protocol Ayman Majali, who spent much of the last seven months with King Hussein during his treatment at the Mavo Clinic, in Rochester, Minnesota, had organised numerous visits by local. Arah and international leaders and dignitaries who arrived in the U.S. to wish the King well.

But with the passing of King Hussein who suffered a fatal relapse only a week after his return to the Kingdom on Jan. 19, arrangements for the funeral required that Majali's team, in coordination with the Jordan Armed Forces, meet several important challenges, iocluding a method by which antagonists such as Syria and Israel, the U.S. and Iraq, whose leaders or representative were arriving in Amman to attend the funeral, would be kept apart.

"We took into considera-

tion all the differences

between our foreign digni-

taries," said Deputy Chief of Protocol Faisal Al Fayez.

We followed a separation rule throughout the procession, putting all Arab delegates together and the rest. including the Israelis, in the other group. Everything went smoothly."

recorded international figures, whose countries are regarded as in conflict with each other, making contact. One prime example was the contact between Syrian President Hafez Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

they held for the late King." Over 50 presidents and entirs, representatives of and other leading politicians, walked shoulder to shoulder with more than 1,000 top Jordanian officials, tribal leaders

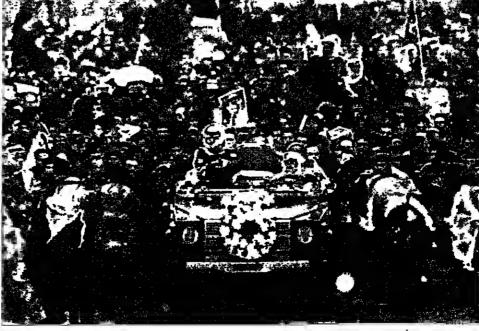
plex of palaces.



As one protocol officer put it, "the fact that all these delegations came to mourn His Majesty brought everyone together, putting aside their differences in the solemnity of the event and the regard

Europe's main royal families and other dignitaries behind the King's casket as it made its way to the Royal cemetery inside the downtown com-

"It was not easy to list the names of the local dignituries who attended the King's



'I just told myself I was on duty for a Royal event that King Hussein was attending and not for his funeral,' said one tearful Royal Guard (photo by Yousef 'Allan)

funeral, because every one in Jordan wanted to be part of the list that exceeded 1,000

names," Fayez said. Most Amman-based diplomats said they were impressed with the funeral arrangements, including official receptions at the airport, transport to the Palace, meetings with His Majesty King Abdullah and Her Majesty

Queen Noor and the prompt departures of 86 private jets which crowded the tarmac of the Queen Alia International

Airport. Having to deal with journalists and the foreign media posed another challenge.

"We had to satisfy the needs of over 1,200 foreign journalists, cameramen and photographers who con-

verged on Jordan to cover the developments," said another Royal Court official.

The army experienced its biggest ever deployment since the 1988 Arab summit to ensure the safety of visi-

The Royal Guard, sporting their green berets and charged with providing security for the Royal family and

their residences, found their mission different this time. We always arranged for His Majesty's family and guests. This time, we had to

аггаnge for King Hussein." The forces had to protect the passage of the King's cortege before one million grieving Jordanians who lined the street of Amman from the King's Palace to the cemetery to pay their last respects to their leader who had ruled for 47 years.

They worked in tandem with an operations room ser up at the Royal Court to prepare for the unprecedented funeral. "We wanted everything to go perfectly as the late King always wanted us to do," said Fayez.

According to the foreign dignitaries' list of participants at the funeral, there were 33 heads of state, 11 crown princes/vice presidents, 10 prime ministers, 6 foreign ministers, 4 other ministers, 16 ambassadors and 17 other

dignitaries. Army officers and soldiers, mainly from the King's Royal Guards, headed by Colonel Hussein Majali, stood stoically throughout the procession preparations and the five-hour funeral.

"I just told myself to consider that I was on dury for a Royal event that King Hussein is attending and not for his funeral," a tearful member of the Royal Guards told the Jordan Times during the procession.

"We all feel that we have lost our father." said another. For the three official days of condolences following the funeral Royal Protocol organised the flow of more than 100,000 people who arrived at Raghadan and Zahran Palaces to offer sympathies to the Royal family.

"About 18,000 men per day offered their condolences to His Majesty King Abdullah and the Royal family members at Raghadan Palace." said Fayez, adding that " also about 10,000 women per day came to Zahran Palace to offer Her Majesty Queen Noor and other Royal family members their condolences as well."

The protocol team continues to work long hours responding to the constant flood of letters of condolences pouring in daily to the Royal Court. They all say that they are deeply touched hy the kindness of people who have written from every comer of the world, and that somehow their words of solace have helped to com-

fort them in their own sorrow.

Indian PM arrives for talks in Pakistan

WAGAH, Pakistan (R) — at each other, we are not Indian Prime Minister Atal Pakistan by hus Saturday to an official welcome for his fence-mending visit and protests by thousands demanding he go home and withdraw his troops from Kashmir.

Vajpayee, inaugurating a bus service which is supposed to ease suspicion by the two newly nuclear states, was greeted at the Wagah border crossing hy Pakistani Printe Minister Nawaz Sharif with whom he will hald two days of

"I am conscious that this is a defining moment in south Asian history," Vajpayee said on his arrival. "And I hope we will be able to rise to the challenge."

Information Pakistani Minister Mushahid Hussain told reporters the upgrading of talks from diplomat level shawed a willingness to defuse decades of enmity.

"There is political will at the highest level to snive the issues which divide our two

Asked if the talks would succeed or he mere symbolism, he replied: "Success means we are not shooting

shouting at each other, suc-Behari Vajpayee arrived in cess means we are talking to each other," he said.

We have to stop worrying about the past," said Hussain as the two leaders prepared to leave by belicoptet for Lahore.

As Vajpayee arrived at Wagah to a red-carpet welthousands of Islamists marched to the centre of Lahore, the summit venue, to demand that India get its army out of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir, where thou-sands have died in sectarian and pulitical violence.

Vajpayee's hus was preceded across the border by a troupe of Indian dancers before it reached a white line in no-man's land marking the frontier between the two old enemy states.

Sharif and Vajpayee embraced inside Pakistan. symbolising the hope that the summit would launch two hitterly divided states into a new era of peace and cooperation.

The land border is normaily sealed to all but foreign nationals, underlying the mutual suspicion which has escalated into three wars, two of them over

Riot police lined the road Wagah and were deployed all over Lahore to quell disturbances which began Friday and carried on through Saturday.

Paramilitary rangers were drafted into Lahore after three people were wounded in clashes in which tear gas and live rounds were fired to disperse demonstrators incensed that Muslim Pakistan was playing host to a Hindu leader.

Lahore residents said security had been stepped up in the city, especially near the governor's residence, and the two hotels hosting 250 visiting Indian journalists and the retinues of Pakistani and Indian offi-

Islamabad routinely accuses Indian intelligence of fomenting violence in Pakistan which has killed thousands in recent years. India denies the charges.

Pakistan says the key to easing 50 years of mistrust with its powerful neighbour is a peaceful settlement over Kashmir, which is two-thirds ruled by India and the rest by Pakistan.
At least 22 people were

reported killed in Kashmir Friday and Saturday in the



Pakistani youths burn an effigy of Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee during a rally in downtown Karachi. The rally was organised by the Sbabab-e-Milli party to protest against Vajpayee's visit to Pakistan. Vajpayee reached the border city of Lahore Saturday and was warmly received by his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif as both leaders aim at lessening tension between the two nuclear rivals

China, Pakistan discuss greater military ties

ISLAMABAD (R) — Long-time allies. China and Pakistan discussed military ties Saturday and their ministers were quoted as saying they wanted to enhance their defence cooperation. Defence Chinese

Minister Cbi Haotian met Pakistani Foreign Ministet Sartaj Aziz at the start of a five-day visit. A Pakistani government

statement quoted him as expressing the hope that his visit would "further the already strengthen (existing) friendly and relations time-tested between the two countries and their armed forces and would result in further enhancement of coopera-

tion in defence field'. Aziz expressed Pakistan's "resolve to continue close cooperation with China in all fields, including the defence and security", the statement

The statement did not say if any specific areas of military cooperation were dis-

China bas been supplying military hardware to Pakistan, including fighter aircraft and battle tanks, since the 1960s.

Chi, who arrived in Islamabad Friday night on the first leg of a three-natinn trip, is also due to meet Pakistani President Mohammad Rafiq Tarar, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, armed forces chiefs and attend a naval defence show in Karachi.

aimed at enhancing mutual understanding and trust, promoting friendship and cooperation, and strengthening the comprehensive partnership of cooperation towards the 21st century between our two countries and two armed forces," he said in a statement on

The Chinese minister arrived a day before Prime Minister Atal Bebari Vajpayee of India, which has had decades of strained relations with both Beijing and Islamabad, was 10 make a historic cross-bor-

der bus trip to Pakistan. Chi and Aziz discussed the south Asian security situation in the light of tit-fortat nuclear tests by India and Pakistan last may, according to the Pakistani

statement. Aziz, the statement said, expressed the hope that Vajpayee's February 20-21 visit would "pave the way for a substantive dialogue on all outstanding (India-Pakistan) issues", including their dispute on the Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir.

China openly supported Pakistan on the Kashmir question in the 1960s and 1970s but appeared to be avoiding taking sides in recent years while Beijing and New Delhi moved to end years of tensions between them since their brief border war in 1962.

India rules two-thirds of Kashmir, where it is fighting a separatist revolt by Muslim militants seeking independence or union with Pakistan, which controls the remaining third.

Three hurt in Pakistan protests against Vajpayee

LAHORE (R) — Three students were injured Saturday the city waving black hanners of protest, urging residents as clashes erupted between security forces and Muslim activists protesting against a trip to Pakistan by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Witnesses said police stopped a bus carrying stii-dent demonstrators to Lahore and shots and teargas rounds were fired. At least Himalayan region three of the bus occupants were injured.

Scattered clashes were reported between police and demonstrators who tried to erect blazing barricades to disrupt the visit by Vajpayee. "God is great. Burn down

the Indian parliament," the demonstrators chanted, before being moved on by a security presence which grew as the clock ricked towards Vajpayee's arrival. There were no welcoming banners for Vajpayee in the streets of the city. Not a sin-

gle Indian flag was seen.

Militants of the Jamaat-i-

Islami Islamic group roamed

U.S. attorney general asked to look into

dents to join in further demonstrations planned for the afternoon. Half the city's sbops shut

in response to a strike call from conservanve Muslim groups who see the weekend Summit as a sellout of their political and religious claims to the bitterly disputed

The strike call was issued right-wing Islamic groups who want no compromise to Pakistan's insistence that the people of Kashmir be allowed to vote in a U.N. plebiscite to detetmine their future.

Lahore residents said security was stepped up in the city, especially near the governor's residence, where the talks will take place.

Pakistan says the key to easing 50 years of mistrust with its powerful neighbour is a peaceful settlement over Kashmir, which is twothirds ruled by India and the

Pakistani officials say the dispute over Kashmir, which India says is an integral part of its territory, is at the top of the talks' agenda.

But few expect a breakthrough to a dispute which Islamabad says is a flashpoint between the two countries, which both carried out nuclear tests in May last

Pakistani officials say all disputes are on the table for the talks and that confidence-building measures to lessen the risk of a nuclear confrontation could be agreed by the two premiers by the time their formal talks end Sunday afternoon.

"This region has been left behind, very severely left behind," Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman Tariq Altaf told a late night Friday news briefing.

"It is time we created an environment for peace and security and strengthened the stability of the region.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nuclear reactor stopped at Ukraine's largest atomic plant

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — A nuclear reactor at Ukraine's largest atomic power plant was stopped Saturday for lengthy planned repairs, officials said. Reactor No. 6 at the Zaporizhia plant will also be loaded with new fuel rods before coming back on line April 23, said the state nuclear regulatory administration. Zaporizhia, some 640 kilometres southeast of the capital Kiev, has six Sovietdesigned Vver-1000 reactors — considered to be more reliable than the RBMK reactor of the type that operate at Ukraine's Chemobyl nuclear power plant. Still, several dozen malfunctions were reported at the plant's reactors in 1998, and they were often under repair last year. Ukraine relies heavily on its five nuclear power plants, which account for more than 40 per cent of the former Soviet Republic's electricity production.

Indian villagers invite Nawaz Sharif to his birthplace

JATI UMRA, India (AP) — Swelling with pride, hundreds of farmers in the village where Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was horn sent a letter to him Saturday, hailing his efforts to promote peace between India and Pakistan, and inviting him to visit. Residents of Jati Umra village in Punjab state, nearly 40 kilometers gathered in local Sikh temple Saturday and in the house the prime minister's ironsmith father. Mian Sharif Mohammad, lived in decades ago before migrating to the western part of undivided India, which later became part of the newly carved out Muslim nation of Islamabad. Sharif spent his childhood in the village. studying in the local schools with many elders who gathered at his residence. Friday, village headman Zail Singh handed over to local officials a framed letter that Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee has promised to carry to Sharif when he crosses the border on a historic hus ride. "He lives in our heart and there is great respect for him in this village." said Arjan Singh, 83, a friend of

Snow traps thousands in Europe, flood alert in Belgium

VIENNA (AFP) — Thousands of holiday-makers were trapped in Austria, Switzerland and central France Saturday after heavy snowfalls cut off ski resorts where avalanche threats blocked roads. In Austria, thousands of people, mostly tourists, were trapped in resorts in the mountains of the Tyrol and the Vorarlberg in the west of the country amid fears of avalanches, local police said. Heavy snowfall and rain in recent days have increased the risk of avalanches, leaving many roads impassable. More than 13,000 tourists were stranded in the Paznaun valley in the Vorarlberg region but were due to leave their boliday homes later in the day. An avalanche cut of the main east-west rail route early Saturday, although bus services replaced the cancelled trains. In Switzerland, hundreds of people were trapped in the Alpine regions around Bern, Adelboden and Grindelwald in the centre of the country after heavy snows posed the serious risk nf avalanches. Authorities said the north-south Gothard tunnel would be closed until Sunday, blocking a number of trucks on access roads. An avalanche also cut rail connections to the town of Bex in the south. In the north of the country heavy rains and snowmelt caused flooding in the area around Basel and Aarau and police said the river Rhine was rising steadily, although no alert has yet been sounded. In the French Haute-Savoie mountains, access to the ski resorts of Morzine and Avoriaz was cut as snow choked the roads to the area, traffic organisations said. Meanwhile in Belgium, heavy rain and thawing snow threatened flooding Saturday, with the area around Liege in the northeast on flood alert, local authorities said. Firefighters were also called out overnight to rescue two people stranded on the roof of their car in Verviers 20 kilometres southwest of Liege.

Quake rocks Taiwan, no damage reported

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Idan Lennon is due to get a plaque in his native Liverpool

ALGENTOWN.

TAIPEI (R) - An earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale hit southern Taiwan Saturday, but there were no immediate reports of damage, officials said. A central weather hureau statement said the quake's epicentre was 51 km east of Taiwan's southeastern island of Lanyu and some 199.5 km beneath the earth's surface. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties from the tremor, an interior ministry spokesman said by telephone. The quake was felt in most of the island's southern region, with its highest magnitude on land at two on the Richter scale in the southern city of Kaohsiung Earthquakes are relatively common in Taiwan and rarely cause severe damage.

Nestlé urges caution over nutty ice-cream

LONDON (AFP) - Swiss food giant Nestlé has warned people allergic to hazelnuts not to eat one of its icecreams on sale here, which fails to mention it contains them. The toffee flavoured ice-cream, which is made in Germany, is being sold at convenience stores and gas stations in Britain and the Republic of Ireland, but not in large supermarkets, the company said, "Anyone who is not allergic to hazelnuts can continue to enjoy this product." a Nestlé spokesman said. "However, the small number of people who do suffer hazelnut allergy must not eat this ice cream and should dispose of it." The company also said the batch consisted of 17,000 containers, of which they still have 2,000 in stock. It added that the remaining 15,000 had been sold, "and most will probably already have been consumed safely."

Armed bandits kill 12, wound 20 in northeastern Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) - Heavily armed bandits killed at least 12 people, including seven police officers, in an ambush attack on a bus in northeastern Kenya, newspapers reported Saturday. The attack happened Friday outside Garissa, about 210 miles northeast of Nairobi, where thieves sprayed the bus with gunfire during a holdup, the east African Standard reported. At least 20 people were wounded, some seriously. The officers were killed when the bandits also attacked a vehicle the police were escorting behind the bus. local police chief Maurice Makhanu told the Daily Nation. He said the thieves shot out the tires of the bus and engaged in a gun battle with the arriving police. The bandits robbed the bus passengers before fleeing into the thick brush. Police reinforcements and military personnel were sent to the area to hunt for the

Cambodia students call off trial protest

PHNOM PENH (R) students demanding that Khmer allowed to live out their lives Rouge leaders be put on trial called off a march planned for Sunday after warnings from authorides that their rally was illegal and might: be broken up with force. "We're not going to hold a

rally tomorrow because we've heard that the government will crack down on U.S.," student leader Saro Sivutha told Reuters Saturday. The students had earlier

called for a rally and march through Phnoni Penh Sunday to demand that leaders of the Khmer Rouge, held responsible for the deaths of more than a million people during their 1975-79 rule, be brought to justice. Saro Sivutha said the stu-

dents were giving the government more time to demonstrate their commitment to bringing Khmer Rouge leaders to trial. "We'll give the govern-

ment more time to bring them to trial but if they don't do it we'll (protest) for sure." he said.

Calls for the ageing leaders of the radical leftist group to

the government in late December, appealing to be as ordinary citizens. Prime Minister Hun Sen

has given mixed signals regarding his views on whether they should be hrought to justice.

All surviving Khmer Rouge leaders but one, military chief Ta Mok. are living freely in Cambodia while the government ponders their fate and awaits the recommendations of a team of U.N.-appointed jurists.

The team, led by Sir Ninian Stephen, a judge and former governor-general of Australia, is due to present its views on a Khmer Rouge trial to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan within days. It is expected to recommend some form of tribunal,

Hun Sen, a former junior Khmer Rouge officer who broke away in 1977, has said a trial for Khmer Rouge leaders might not be in the interests of national reconciliation and could spark fresh fighting.

But he has also told top U.N. officials that he backs the U.N. team's efforts to set up a tribunal for the crimes face trial have mounted since committed during Khmer two of them surrendered to Rouge rule from 1975-79.

whether Starr lied in U.S. House testimony WASHINGTON (AP) — A testifying under oath ... directly relevant to his fitlawmaker ness to continue as inde-

Democratic wants Attorney General Janet Reno to look into whether independent counsel Kenneth Starr lied under oath to the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment hearings last

In a letter to Reno, Rep. Barney Frank Massachusetts criticised Starr's answer to a ques-tion from Frank about alleged grand jury leaks from Starr's office.

The questioning occurred last Nov. 19 as the committee was considering impeaching President Bill Clinton on the basis of Starr's report about his liaison with former White House intern Monica

Lewinsky. "Given the way Mr. Starr has treated people wbo have got in his way in this investigation ... if he were investigating himself in this matter he would have almost certainly charged himself with perjury,"

Frank said Friday. "I do not wish to follow Mr. Starr's example of using perjury as a political tool. But I do think ... bis disregard of the truth in pendent counsel."

Friday. Frank released his Feb. 11 letter to Reno. Meantime, justice department officials continued to weigh how to proceed with an investigation of Starr's

Justice officials wrote to Starr recently stating their intention to launch such an inquiry but have held off beginning it pending resolution of issues raised by his response, officials have

Questioning whether the justice department should be investigating him. Starr has proposed that an outside counsel bandle the inquiry rather than the department's internal watchdog agency, the office of professional responsibility.

It was learned that the consideration of Starr's demand for an outside counsel is still in a preliminary stage in the department.

The independent counsel

act gives Reno authority to

remove Starr for good

cause and requires her to

explain her reasons in writ-

ing to Congress. Some department officials have argued that implies that she has authority to investigate

Thursday. Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder said: "We would leave all of our options open as to who might do such an investigation if one were to be done."

Reno herself has been out of the country all week on official trips to Mexico and South Africa and has not been able to meet with Starr to discuss the matter, as he requested, it was learned.

Last Friday, Holder met with Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah, who backed Starr's bid for an outside investigator. Holder told Hatch the department was trying to reach an accommodation with Starr, according to people familiar with the closed-door

meeting. Starr has suggested former Carter administration Attorney General Griffin Bell as a possible candidate for the job, the New York Times reported

Friday. Publicly, no one in the department or Starr's office would address the sensitive issue. Nor did Starr's office respond to a call seeking

his comment on Frank's allegation. In his letter to Reno. Frank noted that Starr claimed he was hampered in answering Frank's question about leaks because "I

sealed proceeding." Frank then asked: "Sealed at your request, correct?"

am operating under a

"No. Mr. Frank." Starr replied. "It is sealed by the chief judge hased upon her determination of ..." at that point. Frank interrupted with another question. Frank noted that U.S.

District Judge Norma Holloway Johnson had since unsealed court documents, filed before Starr's testimony, in which Starr's office wrote: "The office of the independent counsel urges the court to keep the order under seal until the conclusion of the investigation by the special master and findings by this court."

Johnson had named a special master to investigate alleged grand jury leaks by Starr's office.

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Sovuz TM-12 spacecraft blasts off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome, Russia launched what could be the last crew to the Mir space station - a Russian, a Frenchman and a Slovak (Reuters photo)

Blast rocks plant in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania (AP) — An explosion tore through a infrared chemical company plant in eastern Pennsylvania, injuring at least eight people and trapping as many as four others under rubble and steel beams, authorities

The blast Friday night sent a gas cloud over the area and authorities warned residents to stay inside until they determined it was harmless. One of the injured was in critical con-

Lehigh county executive Jane Baker said at least one woman was trapped and there may be three more people inside. She said rescue workers had been able to communicate with the

very difficult because the victims are under large pieces of steel and they're trying to lift those pieces of steel and get

A police helicopter using the site. equipment searched overhead and rescue workers dug through

the rubble. County emergency director John Conklin said it appeared bleak for those missing. "The remains of the building are unstable and they're doing it (the search) care-

fully and methodically," he said. "They are digging through the debris with small band tools."

The injured included three people in an office across the street from the Concept Sciences Inc. building. People three kilometres the Lehigh Valley airport industrial park reported see-

ing a large blue flash. "I was working on my computer and I felt a big boom and the whole house shook and the windows sounded like a big gust of wind was coming in," said Tracy Miklus, who lives torn siding.

about eight kilometres from 'We looked outside and

we could see a big cloud just going over the city." Authorities did not immediately know what the chemical was and ordered people within one mile of

the explosion to stay indoors. Conklin said authorities believed the plant was processing the chemical hydroxylamine, used for processing salt in water heaters when the explosion

He said the gas posed no danger. Another chemical, potassium hydroxide, was also involved, officials said.

Debris was strewn over the blast area about five kilometres northeast of Allentown in eastern Pennsylvania. Only portions of the steel framework remained; nearby buildings had shattered windows and

Britain highlighting homes of some less traditional residents

LONDON (AP) — A distincnon once largely reserved for the historic homes of poets and politicians, Britain is increasingly issuing blue commeniorative plaques to mark the former abodes of the nation's more offbeat resi-

Geoff Noble of the English Heritage, the government agency that selects homes for the honour, said the agency is interested in going beyond the usual recipients. Even despots and rock stars are considered.

"We do cenainly encourage variety. In fact, we've got such a preponderance of poets and politicians, we're always keen to see new people suggested." Noble said.

To be chosen for the honour, a home's owner must have been born at least 100 years ago or be dead for at least 20 years.

John Lennon is due to get a plaque in his nauve Liverpool next year, on the 20th anniversary of his death. Also under consideration for a plaque is the former

London homes of Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta, praised by some as the man who helped free Africa from British rule. Markers also have beeo proposed for American poet

Sylvia Plath and independent Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah, who is accused by human rights groups of rounding up and detaining opponents while in

"We aren't looking for saints and angels," Noble said. "We don't comb through people's private lives."

But there are some limits. Noble said the former home of someone "very villainous" probably would not be granted a plaque since Englisb heritage must receive the current homeowner's before erecting the blue-and-

A panel of six historians. journalists and museum officials who consider the public's recommendations are now especially interested in military heroes, sports personalities, scientists, engineers and entertainers, Noble

Currently, London boasts 762 plaques, and English Heritage hopes to expand the programme across the country, said spokeswoman Joanne Finnie.

More than 100 nominations come in each year, with about a dozen selected for the hon-

Among the more famous honourees are Jimi Hendrix - The First Rock Star To Join The List - Whose Home At No. 23 Brook Street, in Ritzy Mayfair, was decorated in 1997. Other famous names on the plaques include Karl Marx, Winston Churchill, and Virginia

Chavez's plan to give military high profile provoking fears

plan to give the army a bigger role in running Venezuela is provoking fears of a return to the days of repressive military regimes in one of Latin America's oldest democra-

President Hugo Chavez says Venezuela's 120,000member armed forces and former coup plotters like himself can help this oilrich nation overcome its ecocomic troubles and bring order to a chaotic, corruption-riddled govern-

The leader of a failed 1992 coup attempt who took office Feb. 2, Chavez has named fellow coup participants to top posts including Caracas goveroor, transportation minister, secret police chief and taxation head.

He also appointed two active army colonels to key positions in the buge state oil mocopoly, Petroleos de

Venezuela. itarian period in Latin One former coup plotter America," said Micbael Venezuela.

Venezuela was elected president of the (AP) — The president's senate and another was reelected governor of Zulia state in the beart of Venezuela's oil belt.

Chavez also announced that be will boost the role of the army in everyday life, dispatching thousands of soldiers to improve roads, build schools and cultivate farms. The moves bave not been

welcomed Venezuelans. "We are going down a very dangerous path. The new presideot is a military

eotist Anibal Romero. Other critics say Chavez's plans are sending the wrong message at a time when Latin America's fragile democracies are struggling to keep the military in their barracks and out of politics.

populist," said political sci-

The former paratrooper's actions are "an invitation to greater politicisation of the military, which is precisely what led to some of the worst aspects of the authorSbifter, a senior fellow at Inter-American Dialogue, a think tank in Washington, D.C.

But Chavez dismisses such concerns. "The armed forces should be prepared to work for the development, the peace, the progress of our people," be said at a Feb. 4 gala military parade marking the seventh anniversary of his failed putsch.

During the parade, the new president ordered former coup participants from two military rebellions in 1992 back into the ranks of the armed forces, calling them "heroes."

Military dictatorships and repressive civilian regimes ruled most of Latin America until the 1980s, killing, torturiog and makiog thousands of people disappear. Today, all except Cuba have democratically elected governments, but in many the military still

tion," says Shifter. Peru's Alberto Fujimori. On his first day in office,

supreme court tries to tor-

The moves have provoked intense criticism from opposition parties, intellectuals and even a few Chavez supporters.

wields great power. "The subordination of the military to civilian rule, which everybody thought some Venezuelan democ-

would take place after the cold war ended, is far from being achieved and may be going in the wrong direc-

Chavez already has raised worries that be may become an army-backed "caudillo" or political strongman, similar to

Chavez issued a presidential decree for a oatiooal vote on forming a constituent assembly to write a new constitutioo - with Chavez deciding how assembly delegates would be choseo. And this week, be issued what many thought was a veiled warning of violence if the

pedo the decree.

At his rallies, supporters don his trademark red paratrooper's beret - a militaristic image that worries rats. At one event last week, Chavez himself appeared in combat fatigues. He often praises Venezuela's last dictator, 85-year-old Marcos Perez Jimenez. who built highways, bridges, tunnels and hous-

ing projects. Many Venezuelans fed up with skyrocketing crime, rampant corruption and failing public services support Chavez's plans for a growing role for the military, which they view as one of the few institutions that still works.

"We see it as something positive," said Raul Cubas. director of Provea; a leading Venezuelan human rights group, adding that the group obviously would oppose any repression by the armed forces.

He savs Venezuela's military is better trained than most in Latin America, with many officers holding university degrees, and that in other countries military units such as the U.S. Army corps of engineers carry out useful public projects.

Mystery man claims key to

PARIS (R) — A man who says he is the owner of a mysterious car iovolved in the Paris crash that killed Princess Diana is claiming the hefty reward for information, lawyers said Saturday.

The lawyers for Mohammed · Al Fayed, whose soo Dodi died in the crash, said the man claimed his white Citroen Ax was the car detectives have vainly been looking for for

Investigators have coocluded that Diana's Mercedes S-280 brushed against a white Fiat Uno car just before the Aug. 31, 1997, crash, sending pillar in the tunnel under Alma Square beside the river Seine, Al Fayed has offered 10 mil-

lion francs (\$1.7 millioo) for any new information on the crash or the mysterious car. The wealthy Egyptian husinessman has accused the

British secret services of plotting to prevent his Muslim soo from marrying the mother of Britain's future king, Prince William.

Al Fayed's lawyer Alain Dartevelle said the man, whom he declined to name, appeared to be more serious than others who claimed the reward and

the limousine skidding into a turned out to he jokers or swindlers.

"We are checking," he said. He said the man claimed to have been a passeoger in his own car. He said he vanished after the accident and did not testify because his car was uninsured and he was afraid of being fined.

"We have to be very cautious. It's not the first time that someooe claims to have information," a spokesman for lawyer Georges Kiejman said.

Citroen Axs are roughly the size of a fiat Uoo. But investigators have said that pieces of rear light covers found at the scene were definitely from a Fiat Uno.

The reward was offered in a quarter-page ad in the tabloid France-Soir earlier this mooth, Investigating magistrate Herve Stephan ended his 17month- long probe into the crash last month, giving all parties involved until this week to request further lines of investigation.

He has placed nine photographers and a photo agency motorcyclist under examinatioo for manslaughter oo suspicion that they cootributed to the crash by chasing Diana's car and then failed to give assistance to the victims.

The 10 have denied any responsibility for the crash. Investigators say they have uncovered oo evidence to support the theory that Diana was the victim of a conspiracy.

They say driver Henri Paul, who also died in the crash, appears primarily to hlame as he was driving at two to three times the legal speed limit and had a criminal level of alcohol in his blood when he lost cootrol of the car.

The state prosecutor's office, in a possible hint at the probe's eventual conclusion, referred to the crash as an "accideor".

Estrada asks rebels to free

general MANILA (R) - Philippine President Joseph Estrada appealed Saturday to Communist rebels to free an army general and his aide kidnapped on the southern island of Mindanao but the rebels said they wanted military operations suspend-

Estrada insisted that there would be no negotiations with the Communist rebels for the release of Brigadier-General Victor Obillo and the junior officer with him.

"We will pursue the military operation. I am appealing to them to release (the officers) so that no one will get hurt," he said in his regular weekly television and radio broad-

A progress report on the abduction of the two officers released by the armed forces Saturday indicated that the rebels had demanded that "military operations be postponed".

The rebels had also withdrawn an earlier demand for the release of a jailed comrade in exchange for the two officers' freedom. Instead, they wanted his case taken up by a joint panel comprising representatives of the government and the Communist group National Democratic Front which are reviving peace negotia-

The Philippines has been holding talks with the guerrillas on ending the Marxist rebellion but negotiations bogged down last year on technicali-

General Obillo, commander of an engineering brigade, and his aide were kidnapped Wednesday in Davao city, 980 km south of the Philippine capital.

Obillo is the highest ranking military officer abducted by Communist rebels in their 30-year insurgency.

The armed forces have launched a huge search operation for the two officers. Friday they deployed four rocket-firing helicopter gunships to reinforce ground troops and police already pursuing the rebels in Davao.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Save the Children Federation — U.S. (SCF) is an International NGO working in 39 countries around that world. SC has been working in Jordan for the past 15 years, creating such renowned projects as the Ban Hamida Women's Weaving Programme, Jordan River Designs and the Group Guaranteed Lending and

Recently, Save the Children has developed an exciting new programme — Economic Opportunities for Jordanian Youth EOJY. The goal of the programma is to bulld the knowledge, skills and attitudes of youth so that they can succeed in the workforce as either employees or entrepreneurs. At the same time, the programme will focus on building a facilitative environment for youth to both acquire these skills and to utilise them. In implementing the EOJY Programme, SC will partner with privata sector leaders, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and UNRWA.

Anticipating significant donor funding for this programme, SC is accepting CVs for the following positions Senior Management

 Training Coordinator: (>60% field time) Responsible for overseeing and conducting volunteer and staff training. Also will be responsible for overseeing expansion into schools and will supervisa district teams. This position will work closely with the Evaluation and Reporting Officer. Significant suparvision skill needed and

practical training expariance — using participatory training methods — is a must. • External Liaison Coordinator: (>60% field time) Responsible for public relations, fund-raising, coordination of special events and banquets as well as media campaigns. This position requires excellent communication skills with 3-5 years experience in fund-raising or marketing. Significant NGO or private

• Evaluation/Reporting Coordinator: (>20% field time) Responsible for developing and implementing. monitoring and evaluating systems at all levals.. studant/volunteer/curriculum/programme. Also responsible for all reporting and programme documentation. This position requires significant axparience in designing and implementing avaluation systems as well computerised MIS. This position also requires excellent English

 Methodology Coordinator: (>20% field time) Responsible for developing, testing and documenting programma materials and curriculum. This position requires extensive education experiance with good knowladge of participatory mathodologies. Excellent Arabic/English writing and translating skills required.

Institutional Development Coordinator: (>50% field time) Responsibla for liaising with government partners to plan, implement, organise and design workshops, training and seminars. Also responsible for identifying, and fostering linkages between the EOJY programme and other youth programmes in Jordan. This position requires some training background and significant experience in developing relations with government and non-government partners.

Support Staff

Administrative Assistant: Responsible for providing logistical support for the Amman-based staff and for creating and maintaining the filing systems for the programme. Also will assist in maintaining and devaloping administration and procurement procedures. A minimum 3 years experience as an administration assistant or

 Accountant Responsible for the daily financial work of EOJY programme as well as assisting in the development of cost recovery mechanisms. Good knowledge of accounting principles and Excel is needed

 Computer Specialist: Responsible for all programme hardware and software support. Also responsible for developing different data bases for programme use. This position will also install tha LAN system and coordinate the Internet Web page development and updating. 3-5 years working experience in computer

hardware and software support and development. All positions noted above are Amman-based. In addition to the criteria above, all staff must be dynamic, responsible, self-starters and should possess good English writing/speaking skills as well as good computer skills.

Interested applicants should send their CVs by mail to the Personnel Director, P.O. Box 9363, Jabal Weibdeh Amman 11191 or fax to 4612 902. Detailed job descriptions will be available at the Save the Children office on Jebal Weibdeh after February 24. No personal appointments will be made or accepted at this time. Applicants should indicate on their cover letter no more than 2 positions for which they are interested and should indicate if thay are not interested in being considered for other positions.

Chairman of the Board of Directors Abdel Salam Tarawneh

Vice Chairman & Director General

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Adding fuel to fire

ISRAEL HAS effectively escalated tension on its northern border with Lebanon when it "annexed" the village of Arnoun to its selfdeclared "security zone" in south Lebanon. By placing barbed wires and planting land mines all around the small village, Israel has taken a measure that is contrary to what is expected from it, i.e., the withdrawal from Lebanon. This ominous development is taking place at a time when Israel is pretending to be seeking a way out of the quagmire that it created for itself in the area. Not only is Israel holding to the security zone to protect its northern region, it now expands the zone to protect its soldiers and their allies in the socalled South Lebanese Army.

We suspect that Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu has chosen to beat up the conflict with Lebanon and Syria in the run-up to the Israeli general election next May. Netanyahu seeks to bolster the image be created for himself as being the man who will ensure his people's security. In his bid to beat his opponents, Labour leader Ehud Barak and centrist party candidate Yitzhak Mordecbai, Netanyhu is out for adventures in tbe north to enhance his political fortunes.

As his predecessor Shimon Peres learnt in 1996, encroaching on more Lebanese territory or being tough on Hizbollah guerrillas will not improve Israeli security. The opposite is true. Hizbollah forces are not likely to respond to the latest Israeli move stoically. There is no doubt that the Lebanese militants will strike at Israel even barder than ever if for no reason other than to demonstrate the futility of the recent Israeli move. Instead of adding fuel to the fire, the Israeli leader would be better advised to deliver on the Wye River accord with the Palestinians. Elections or no elections, what better way can Netanyahu find to prove to his people and to the rest of the peoples in the Middle East that he is a peacemaker than to go forward on the Wye memorandum?

When Netanyahu attended the funeral of His Majesty King Hussein not quite two weeks ago, he promised a new beginning for the peace process. He returned from the funeral to his country saving he was determined to conclude peace treaties with Damascus and Beirut. Typical of the Israeli leader, he never delivers on his promises. In fact. Netanyahu reneged even sooner on his pledge for peace by setting the stage once again for another derailment of the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Fahed Funck noted that almost all the Jordanian municipulities suffer from poverty, heavy debts and financial deficit. Fanek said that total revenues of some of these municipalities are not enough even to pay their debts, personnel wages or simply to provide for basic services. Meanwhile, the Greater Amman Municipality has a financial surplus due to the large number of taxpavers, one-third of whom are migrants who have deprived their own municipalities from income, said Fanek. Money is spent extravagantly on fancy buildings, and publishing costly magazines, which are of no interest but to those who write in them, Fanek claimed, adding that the goals behind encouraging writers to write for them is purely propagandist. In such a situation, he urged for a redistribution of Amman's revenues to help other municipalities carry out their basic duties, and to help the Jordanian countryside, which suffers from poverty and unemployment.

Al Dustour's Mazen Saket commented on the arrest of Kurdish Labour Party leader Abdullah Ocalan, saying that the arrest has revealed one important fact: persecuting individuals or leaderships accused by the new world order of terrorism or crimes against human rights. Regardless of individual circumstances, a common thread is resistance to the America, the writer pointed out. Although some of these people may have violated human rights, the persecution and punishment is aimed at eliminating liberation movements across the world, he said. There are no real comprehensive efforts to end terrorism, and there is no justice in chasing terrorists, said Saket and added that most of the current Israeli leaders have been behind acts of terrorism, murder and assassination. According to the writer, the aim is to weaken, blackmail and pursue leaders such as Palestinian National Authority President Yasser Arafat and Cuban President Fidel Castro. At the same time, the U.S. supports dictators, who preside over the most repressive military regimes in the 20th century, said Saket. The most dreadful massacres in this century have been conducted by Western intelligence departments, including the CIA. The writer said until the double standards are removed, he cannot support the persecution of terrorists.

The myth of the vanishing middle class

TWENTY YEARS ago we were If by the middle class we mean told that the middle class in the group of people who earn a Jordan had all but disappeared. Ten years later the story was repeated and the middle class was claimed to have suffered a meltdown and vanished. During the past ten years, we were warned every year about the complete demise of the middle class. We are pretty sure that the same claim will be asserted time and again in the years to come. The vanishing middle class seems to be a nice and exciting story. The one who makes the charge looks good, wise, and concerned.

At the outset we have to agree to disagree on what is meant by the middle class. Definitions vary widely, but the Jordanian middle class is still there and forms the majority of Jordanian society under any definition.

medium income, around 70 per cent of the population must be described as middle class, since we know that the rich do not exceed five per cent of the population, and those who live below the line of poverty are assumed to be around 25 per cent.

If, on the other hand, the middle class means those limited income groups who make their income in the form of salaries and wages. then we still find a proportion of the population in the vicinity of 70 per cent. Their share of the national income is around 45 per cent according to estimates in the national accounts. These groups include all government personnel both civilian and military, and all those working in the private sector for a monthly salary.

However, if we apply the Marxist definition of the middle class, which is to mean those who produce services, oo the uoderstanding that those who produce commodities form the working class, and the industrialists who own the factories and those who own the plantations form the bourgeoisie class, then we can point to the fact that services form 67 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Jordan, a rough indication that the middle class, as defined by Marx, amounts to two thirds of the Jordanian society.

The middle class was, and still is, the backbone of Jordanian society. It takes on its shoulders the heaviest burdens of the country's efforts economically, politically, and socially. No one in his right mind can deny its presence. or claim that it has disappeared or

Sunday's **Economic Pulse**



Dr. Fahed Fanek

It is legitimate to complain that the economic situation is very tough indeed. It is our right to take exception when it comes to the standard of living, but no one can

correctly claim that the middle class has vanished. Such a claim is not supported by facts, figures, or serious observations. It does not serve a useful purpose.

The middle class meltdown is a common myth only rivalled by the myth that over 50 per cent of the Jordanian workforce work for the government and its institutions. This last claim is almost taken

for granted, yet it is unterly false. The fact is that the number of civilians working for the government amount to 157,000, 40,000 work for governmental establishcorporations. ments Assuming that the active military personnel amount to 85,000, the total number of individuals working for the government just exceeds 282,000, or around 23.5 per cent of the Jordanian work-

calan: Chaos and chance

By Gwynne Dyer

THE LONG controversy about causation is over. The events surrounding the arrest of Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan over the past few days have conclusively shown that the world is not driven by conspiracies, but by clumsiness, incompetence, and sheer

Two weeks ago, the Turks were trying to persuade the European Union to let them join, and the Greeks were minding their own business (apart from trying to block the Turkish appli-

Germany was in the throes of changing its laws to give citizenship to millions of residents who were not of German ethnic origin (including two million Turks and half a million Kurds) - and Kenya, for all practical purposes, was on another planet.

Now Ocalan sits in a Turkish jail while Ankara secretly wonders what to do with him (since his trial and punishment will vastly complicate Turkey's relations with European countries).

Greece and Kenya have had cabinet shuffles, with the ministers who got involved with Ocalan losing their jobs. Four people have died in Kurdish protests all over Europe. North America, and Japan — and the legal reform that was to bring Germany into the modern world is getting less likely by the day.

The man who made all this possible has been a fugitive for months, having lost the base from which he led the guerrilla war for Kurdish independence for the past 14 years. Like many terrorist leaders, his basic cause (equal rights for Turkey's large Kurdish minority) was just, but his every action besmirched it.

Ocalan was a pitiless tyrant in the Maoist mould — some would even say a Pol Pot in waiting — when his Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) was still winning. He has become a pathetic wanderer since a ruthless Turkish counter-insurgency campaign re-established government control of the country's south-east, some 37,000 deaths later. Nobody wanted him - or at least, nobody should have.

Turkey, above all, should not have wanted him. Once it drove him from his base in Damascus in October (by over Europe, Kurdish demonstrators

all of us: the true, united Jordan.

country and for the whole world.

this difficult time in their lives.

we too are mourning our great King.

prosperity.

WE PRAY and ask Allah to lay mercy and blessing on the

soul of the greatest King that ever was. His Majesty King

Hussein. We also pledge to continue our loyalty, support

and help to the new Hashemite leader, King Abdullah and

Crown Prince Hamzah. May Allah bless, support and

help the new Hashemite soldiers continue the message

and follow the path that the late King designed and set for

WE WANT to express our sincere sadness for the loss of

our King. King Hussein. He was a great man for our

He was truly loved by many. He was always working

dilegently for peace and we were always proud of that.

He will be remembered by us and by people worldwide

for his work and sincerity lowards Middle East peace and

We send our condolences to Queen Noor and the Royal

Family. We pray for peace and strength and comfort at

We pray for all who mourn for this great man. He will

be remembered forever for all that he has done for our

country, for the world. May God give King Abdullah a

long, healthy life and also wisdom to guide our country

into the new Millennium. Again, we want to express our

sincere condolences. The Royal family is not alone, for

the country. The effectiveness of the PKK's guerrillas in Turkey, already much reduced by Ankara's drastic policy of shifting the population into 'protected villages,' fell to almost zero.

Ocalan was gyrating around Europe, from Russia to Italy to any other airport that would let him land, with no government willing to give him sanctuary and no real control over events. The war was practically over, and so long as Ocalan remained the PKK's oominal leader, nobody else would be able to revive it.

But did Ankara let well alone? Of course not. It tried to extradite Ocalan from Italy, and when he fled from there it resumed the search. It found him, unsurprisingly, in Greek bands.

All Greek governments loathe and distrust Turkey, but few would be foolish enough to give Ocalan shelter. Even the present Greek government wasn't that foolish at first — but then some Kurdish supporters smuggled the PKK leader into Greece without the government's knowledge, and it succumbed to temptation.

Minister Foreign Theodoros Pangalos knew better than to keep Ocalan in Greece — but he couldn't bear to let the Turks have him.

So began a two-week odyssey in which Greece flew Ocalan all around Europe in the fruitless search for a shelter elsewhere, and then flew him down to Kenya and hid him in the Greek embassy in Nairobi while it sought some African country that would take him.

Meanwhile, Ocalan, never the brightest of men, called all over the world on his satellite phone twhich of course, told everybody's secret service just where he was.) A Turkish snatch squad flew into Nairobi, grabbed the Kurdish leader late last Monday, and spirited him away. He was shown on Turkish TV a day later, snivelling that he loved Turkey and only wanted to

Pangalos and two other Greek cabinet ministers had to resign, while the whole nation writhed in humiliation at having let Ocalan fall into the hands of the arch-enemy. The Kenyan immigratioo chief and several other ministers lost their jobs on the same day. And all

Letters of condolence

Mousa Awwad

Miriam Amarin.

Feriel Amarin,

Karak

Jordan

Fayez & Josephine Amarin.

Rowhie & Summer Amarin.

Ownie & Mary Amarin,

Aziz & Fatin Aranki and

Amar & Buthena Helaseh

Lubna, Waseem & Shadi Sunnaa,

of King Hussein.

dint of virtually threatening war with attacked Greek, Kenyan and Israeli Syria), he posed little further threat to embassies and consulates (since they embassies and consulates (since they suspected Israel of assisting in Ocalan's capture), together with Turkish bars, restaurants, cultural centres and mosques.

The violence was worst in Germany: Dozens of firebombs were thrown, hundreds of Kurds were arrested and three were shot dead during an attack on the Israeli consulate in Berlin. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder warned that Germany would "not tolerate having political conflicts from foreign countries carried over into German streets," and Interior Minister Onto Schily threatened to deport Kurds involved in violence.

It could not bave come at a worse time, for the oew Social Democratic-Green coalition government was already on the defensive over its plans to grant citizenship to the country's long-suffering 'foreign' population (many of whom were born there). The opposition has launched a nationwide petition to keep German citizenship restricted to the ethnically pure - and now these demonstrations have driven the final oails into the coffin of public tolerance.

The biggess losers will be the two million ethnic Turks who make up almost a third of Germany's immigrant population. But everybody else in Germany will also lose from the imminent failure of this brave attempt to bring German law into the 20th centu-

Meanwhile, Ocalan's trial will focus foreign attention oo the poor state of human rights in Turkey and sabotage Ankara's campaign to enter the European Union, while some successor to Ocalan, freed of his presence, will try to revive the PKK and restart the war.

And at this point I must ask: Who wrote this script? No saga of international intrigue written by Tom Clancy or John LeCarre would dare to appear in public with such a flimsy, random, and downright stupid plot. Nobody gets what they want, or even knows what they are doing. It is, I submit, proof positive that the world is not a

The writer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

THE ATHLETES, families, volunteers, and supporters of

Special Olympics express sincerest condolences on the passing

King Hussein will forever be remembered as one of the dear

friends of the Special Olympics movement. His support of our

athletes, as well as the commitment shown by his wife, Queen

Noor, serves as an example to other world heads of state of the

compassion that defines great leadership. Great strides continue

to be made in the development of Special Olympics pro-

grammes for people with mental retardation throughout the

Middle East, a fact that can largely be attributed to the King's

With King Hussein's support, Jordan became the first Middle

Eastern nation to enact a law similar to the Americans With

Disabilities Act. Queen Noor demonstrated her own personal

affection for our movement by leading the Jordanian delegation

at the Opening Ceremonies of the 1987 International Special

Olympics Games and the 1990 Special Olympics European

Games. His Majesty's Royal Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben

The King's influence on our programmes in the Middle East

remains vibrant even today. Events like the recent Special

Olympics Middle East/North Africa Games and the upcoming

Special Olympics Peace Games in Bethlehem would not be

For these and many other reasons, the leaders of Special

Olympics around the world deeply regret the passing of one of

the world's most exemplary leaders. May he rest in peace with

Almighty God, and may the people of his admirable country

raise their heads and hearts and continue to follow his example

MY NAME is Murad Kfouf and I am a 12-year-old

American/Jordanian. On behalf of myself, my younger brother

Ramez and my parents I extend my deep sympathy to all of

Sargent Shriver

Murad Klouf

Special Olympics Chairman

Zeid serves on the Special Olympics Board of Directors.

possible without the history of King Hussein's support.

for many, many years to come.

Jordan on the loss of King Hussein.

The ins and outs of the meaning of 'is'

By Steven Pinker

THE FATE of the 42nd President of the United States may have depended on his theories of language. In his testimony Clinton expounded on the semantics of the present tense and of the words "alone," "cause" and, notoriously, "sex." Clinton realises that language does have a systematic though complex relation to reality. His semantic arguments, if ultimately unsuccessful, show an acuse understanding of the logic and psychology of language.

The world is analogue: language is digital. A tape measure shows that people's beights vary continuously. but, when we talk about them, we face a multiple choice between "tall" and "short." We cannot make a sound halfway between "warm" and "cold" to refer to something tepid, and people who describe themselves "middle-aged" and "wise" cannot pinpoint the

instant they became so. Words are anchored to endpoints, but the continuum between them may be up for

Clinton suggested he was not "alone" with Lewinsky because people were in the Oval Office complex at the time. An intriguing point: since none of us is marooned on an asteroid but shares the planet with five billion others, none of us is ever unambiguously alone. Exactly how far away, how inaudible or invisible or unnouced before we are willing to say that someone is "alone"? At what point in the continuum of bodily contact do we say that "sex" has occurred? How many times, how closely spaced. before it is "sexual relations" or a "sexual relationship"? When consenting adults come together, does one of them "cause" contact. or are the actions of entities with free will never truly caused? The argument doesn't

impress anyone but a professor of semantics, and that is because of another key feature of language: people work around its limitations by tacitly agreeing on how to use it. Conversation requires cooperation. A speaker implicitly guaranlees that the information he is conveying is relevant; that the listener can easily connect it to his prior knowledge and expectations. That allows listeners to hear between the lines in order to pin down vague words, winnow out the unintended

'At what point in the continuum of bodily contact do we say that 'sex' has occurred?'

readings of an ambiguous sentence, piece together fractured utterances, glide over slips of the tongue, and fill in the countless unsaid logical steps in a complete train of thought. When the shampoo bottle says "Lather, rinse, repeat," we don't spend the rest of our lives in the shower; we infer that it means "repeat once." When Marsha says "I'm leaving and John asks "Who is he?" we instantly deduce which "he" John is referring to.

speaking terms" reminds us that, without cooperation, language is impossible. The hold it out. The sketchiness of lan-

guage gives the listener considerable leeway in pinning an interpretation to an utterance. That is fine when the interlocutors are cooperative but not when they are adversaries and the interpretation can send someone to gaol. The law requires language to be do something for which it is badly designed. to leave nothing to the imagination. Lawmakers and lawyers do their best to coopt language for this unnatural job. But at some point we have to fall back on the principle of cooperation and judge the truthfulness of a statement by what a coop-erative speaker would expect his listeners to infer.

goal in this deposition was to be truthful, but not partieularly helpful." Unfortunately, it is in the very nature of human lan-

- The Independent

The expression "to be on

reason we cannot converse with our computers is not that the engineers cannot programme in the grammar and vocabulary of the English language but that they cannot programme in the common sense of a human speaker. In the old Get Smart television series. Maxwell Smart asks the robot Hymie 10 "give me a hand," and Hymie proceeds to unscrew his hand and

Clinton astutely said: "My guage that this goal is impossible.

17:11 wild: How the lead water reshering Robert B. Burker And of Ballantine Books

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A grant of county manual

By Douglas J. R Mill Glight IN wants to tall Property of the property of th Principal Control of Mark the second second The second with quarte

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Muslim children learn the Serb way By Louis-Marie Tattevin

AT THEIR new school in a suburb of Brcko, the children of local Muslim refugees must learn to recognise the flags of Serbia and Montenegro and speak good Serbian, but they will learn nothing about the 1992-1995 war which ravaged Bosnia.

Agence France Presse

Amid the snow-blanketed ruins of Brcko's southern suburbs, the 160 pupils of the Brod Number-3 elementary school are obliged to follow a school course specifically meant for ethnic Serbs and which is heavily tainted with official propaganda.

Their future and that of the school hinges on a decision being dehated in the Austrian capital. Vienna, by an international commission tasked with deciding which of the two rival postwar Bosnian enuties, the Republika Srpska or the Croat-Muslim Federation, should exercise control over the north-east Bosnian town.

Their teacher, Hasija Djejnilovic,

54, said the parents of all the children were among some 5,000 Muslim refugees who had returned to the homes from which they were driven when the Serbs seized the town in

But the school which opened in October lies a few hundred metres on the other side of the houndary which divides the Serb entity from the Federation

Djejnilovic showed journalists a four-page document written in Cyrillic letters, containing the school syllabus sent to her by the Republika Srpska education authority.

The programme contains no reference to the war in Bosnia, nor to the new Bosnia-Herzegovina horn of the Dayton accords. Using school books published in Serhia, the children have to learn to draw the flags and learn the anthems of what remains of the old Yugoslavia: Serbia, Montenegro and the RS.

Three hours a week, a teacher comes out from the city centre to provide lessons in the Serbian language.

"We had many more children at the outset but parents quickly removed half of them because of the Serb teaching programme," Djejnilovic

As a Muslim refugee herself, Dje-jnilovic takes some liberties with the syllahus, with the blessing of the international community.

"Mr. Farrand (the U.S. supervisor in Breko, Robert Farrand) told me not to use what I didn't like," she

However she is not at liberty to use the Federation school programme received from Sarajevo, in which the Bosnian war is recounted under the heading "the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina

Pending a hypothetical compro-mise on school programmes, many Muslims who have returned to live in the suburbs of the disputed town say they want to see Brcko's pre-war ethnic balance restored.

'[The syllabus] contains no reference to the war in Bosnia, nor to the new Bosnia-Herzegovina... the children have to learn to draw the flags and learn the anthems of what remains of the old

want to get back their jobs, their homes and their friends," said Fadil Konjo, who with his wife Anica is rebuilding their home at Stari Rasadnik.

The Konjos were among the first to venture back 18 months ago and to try to rebuild their lives in the ruins of their old neigbbourhood.

"The situation is improving gradually. Between 300 and 400 Muslim families bave come back in recent months. There is now a well, a few shops and a doctor who comes once a week," Fadil said.

But for these refugees who in six years have learned to make do with little, the worst is not the daily hardship hut the uncertainty hanging over their future.

"We are afraid the arhitration will be postponed once again," said Fadil.
"I cannot spend another year without working, living on charity from foreigners. If the fate of Brcko is not

"It is the politicians who preach hatred. Most ordinary people just remain Serb and for us there will be no future. We will leave, not to go to Bosnia, where we will only become refugees again, but somewhere else. another country, and we will never come back, he said.

A ruling on the dispute between Bosnian Serbs and the Muslim-Croat Federation has already been twice delayed, in 1997 and 1998, amid fears that it could threaten the fragile peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The town, currently under Serb control with international supervision, occupies a strategic position for the Serbs in a five-kilometre wide corridor between the eastern and western parts of the Republika

The new hearings in Vienna, following a session here last March, began Monday and are expected to last around 10 days. In theory a ruling could he given next month. although some fear the decision could be postponed again.

Book review: Democracy and the global Theme Park

Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are reshaping the world Benjamin R. Barber New York, Ballantine Books, 1996, 389

pages, \$12.95

CONTRARY TO what its title might imply, this book is not about a real or inagined Islamic war on the rest of the world. Rather, the author is worried about the fate of democracy in the postmodern age. Barber, a professor at Rutgers University (New Jersey), juxtaposes the two most pervasive dynamics in today's world, both of which he sees as threatening democracy: International consumer capitalism and parochial fragmentation. In this equation, "Jihad" is but a symbol for the latter: "A generic form of fundamentalist opposition to modernity that can be found in most world religions," characterised by exclusiveness and hostility to others (p. 205).

Most of what Barber writes about "Jihad" is situated outside of Muslim countries, from provincial autonomy movements like the Basques and Catalonians in France and Spain, to the civil wars in the former socialist bloc. "In this turnultuous world, the real players are not nations at all but tribes, many of them at war with one another. Their aim is precisely to redraw boundaries in order to divide..." Yet these forces are neither the strongest nor the most dangerous on the world scene, for while "Jihad pursues a bloody polities of identity, McWorld (pursues) a bloodless economics of profit. What ends in "Jihad" often begins as an innocent search for self-determination, local identity or multicultural diversity — a defence against "the numbing and neutening uniformities of industrial modemisation and the colonising culture

of McWorld" (pp. 8-9). "McWorld," on the other hand, is shorthand for the global capitalist market "that mesmerises peoples everywhere with fast music, fast computers, and fast food -MTV. Macintosh, and McDonald's pressing nations into one homogenous global theme park, one McWorld tied together by communications, informanon, entertainment, and commerce" (p. 6). While companies once needed the suppomive intervention of governments, they are now truly autonomous and transnational. Existing as 'a shifting set of temporary relationships connected by the computer network, phone and fax," such corporations cannot be fixed to any one location, or regulated by any govern-

ment or democratic institution (p. 26). Barber contends that despite their appearance as mortal enemies, Jihad and McWorld are actually mutually reinforc-

ing: "Both make war on the sovereign nation-state and thus undermine (its) democratic citizenship, neither seeks alternative democratic institutions. Each eschews civil society and belittles democratic institutions... In the turnult of the confrontation between global commerce and parochial ethnicity, the virtues of the democratic nation are lost.." (p. 6-7).

The only flaw in this argument is that had nation-states truly fostered democracy on both the domestic and international scene, perhaps neither Jihad nor McWorld would have evolved as they have. Barber appears at times to possess unwarranted faith in the nation-state. On the other hand, no other successful model for organising human society has emerged in modern times. Reservations aside, Barber has written a thought-provoking book full of empirical data showing how our lives are

increasingly being moulded by macrocontrol, and of which we may even be unaware.

In McWorld, advertising is the fastest growing field; the trademark is more important than the product itself; the issue is not meeting consumer needs but creating new needs. Using examples ranging from cars to Coca Cola and Nike. Barber shows that what is being sold is not only products but a way of life. a particularly American one. Not only do transnational monopolies further aggravate the unjust distribution of resources on a world-scale: they actually narrow citizens' choices about their lifestyle, all the while appearing to offer more choice in the form of flashy new consumer goods.

The example of the automobile is instructive. The U.S.'s post-World War II decision to focus on car manufacturing promoted a set of complementary industries (steel, oil, rubber, etc.) at the expense of others. It also shaped public spending and construction patterns at the expense of alternative social options. Americans' "freedom to choose among scores of automobile brands was secured by sacrificing the liberty to choose between private and public transportation, and mandated a world in which strip malls, suburbs, high gas consumption, and traffic jams (to name just a few) became inevitable" (p. 220). This "American way of life" has since been marketed interna-



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tionally, as residents of Amman can easi-

The dangers lurking in the global theme park are many. Contrary to claims by many economists and politicians, the global market is not democratic; it is ruled by profit, not public interest. Barber gives many examples of market economies prospering in tyrannical states. He also notes that "the hurried pursuit of free markets regardless of social consequences has put democratic development in jeopardy in many nations recently liberated from communism" (p. 15). The market, moreover, is only nominally free: "With a few global conglomerates controlling what is created, who distributes it, where it is shown, and how it is subsequently licensed for further use. the very idea of a genuinely competitive market in ideas or images disappears..." and is replaced by uniformity (p. 89). The international media culture also impinges on democracy at another level, as television, video and computer games combine to bombard the viewer with images and action where style is more important than content. Such media are "fast, fast, faster, and thus by definition hostile to the ponderous pace of careful deliberation upon which all public conversation and decision making on behalf of the common good is premised." In contrast, Barber reminds us: "Democracy, like a good book, takes time" (p. 118).

Sally Bland

A Joyce scholar in Baghdad

By Richard Downes

Yugoslavia'

MOHAMMAD Daweesh should be lexturing young Iraqis on the wonders of English literature. Instead he acts as resident intellectual and translator at the BBC office in Baghdad.

Mohammad has come to realise that working for the foreign media involves hours that few academics would accept. "There's always something to do. My colleagues never seem to sleep." he says with a mischievous grin.

"I live out of town in the small suburb of Dora with my wife, Samira, and our three children. We have a modest house and my wife teaches English in the mornings. At home we are happy but when you look around and see what has happened to this country, you have terrible despair," he said.

The deplorable state of the country's infrastructure, the intermittent electricity, and a new phenomenon, child beggars on the streets, compounds the gloom. 'Never in Iraq before have we seen such a thing. Every day there are more in the streets, people with no work and no livelihood. It is a terrible thing. You know, we Iraqis are very proud and this really hurts me," he said.

Wednesday was the most important day for many years for Mohammad. It was not the air duelling between allied and Iraqi warplanes in the south of the country that preoccupied him, nor the meeting of the country's Revolutionary Command Council, but an important interview. It was his viva voce, the oral examination that would decide whether he would be awarded the title Doctor of Philosophy for his unusual thesis. The subject is a semiotic translation of James Joyce's novel Ulysses. "I am not really nervous," he claimed before beading off to the examination centre, "but this is six years' work and I hope there will be no

problem." To get to the university would usually involve a long and potentially hazardous trip in one of the ramshackle taxis that belch out vile fumes in polluted Baghdad. Nothing can be left to chance when it came to this interview, so Mohammad hired a taxi for the whole day and headed off to the university for the three-hour grilling by five professors. The remarkable thing about the academic scene in Baghdad is that it still exists, even if it is only a shadow of its former self.

At the party afterwards to celebrate his successful interview, the new Dr. Mohammad Daweesh confided that he had been nervous. "You may think that all the best Iraqis are outside the country. I suppose that is true but they did not make it easy for me. Those professors that stayed behind are no fools, you know. They made it tough for me," he

After the excitement of the interview it

is back to the humdrum existence of translating news conferences and dealing with the sometimes silly queries and questions of foreign correspondents. But every day, subject to the demands of his employer, Mohammad makes a point of visiting the library of Baghdad University to check on some fact for his research, or just for a quiet place to read. It is a habit that comes from a deep love of literature. 'I have to read, and when I read I want to translate it into Arabic so that others can share the richness of English language literature with me," he said.

A short, almost throwaway phrase in Ulysses drew Mohammad into the rich and complex world of 20th-century literature. The passage concerns a cat asleep next to some children playing marbles, as the novel's hero, Leopold Bloom, journeys through Dublin. Deciding to avoid the cat, Bloom remarks to himself; "Better not to bother them. Mohammad cut his sleeve in order not to bother one." The intriguing reference to the Muslim Prophet in a novel whose central character is a Dublin Jew perplexed Mohammad, who was studying linguistics at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

Months of independent research failed to throw light on the reference, but a chance encounter with a Sufi mystic revealed its source: The legends that have built up among Sufi scholars. One legend surrounding the Prophet told of his waking from an afternoon siesta to find a cat asleep on his long sleeve. "He did not want to wake the cat, so he got a scissors and he cut his sleeves, left them there under the cat and went away," said Mohammad

The episode speaks of the gentleness of the Prophet and is treasured in certain Muslim traditions.

"I wonder how James Joyce got this story. It is amazing. One would have to have a deep knowledge of the life of the Prophet to know this sort of detail. I spoke to many religious people here in Baghdad. They couldn't tell me anything

'Perhaps he found in when he was in Trieste, from the Bosnian Muslims," he

From the age of 17 the work of Joyce and another Irish writer, Samuel Beckett, has fascinated him. "I started to read Beckett first but quickly realised that Joyce was in many ways the power behind Beckett. So I started reading Joyce. First Duhliners, then A Portrait of the Artist until I eventually came to Ulysses. What a novel, what an extraordinary project. I remember the first days reading it. It was very difficult, very complex, but absorbing."

His thesis on translating the novel into Arabic will now be followed by an attempt to translate the entire work. Mohammed's greatest ambition is to walk the route of Bloom's travel through

Mohammad

Daweesh's greatest ambition is to walk the route of Bloom's travel through Dublin on Bloomsday, 16 June (file photo)

Dublin on Bloomsday, 16 June. That looks increasingly unlikely as sanctions have isolated even literary scholars such as Mohammad from the international mainstream. Last year be wrote to the British Library lending department in Yorkshire, requesting copies of the Joyce Quarterly journal. As an overseas member with credit coupons bought when he was resident in Britain, he was not prepared for the caustic reply. 'They refused, saying they couldn't process my application because of sanctions imposed by the British government, and they warned me. They said don't send any further requests until sanctions are lifted. It is depressing, upsetting. James Joyce has nothing to do with chemical weapons or biological secrets," he said, the look of bewilderment mixed with genuine hurt visible in his large brown eyes.

"The Western commitment to honouring sanctions has gone too far. It does not differentiate between individual needs and military needs," he said, before packing up his office materials and heading home for the day.

Tucked into his satchel is his latest project. The translation of a long obituary of the poet Ted Hughes. I have always liked this poet. He is full of strange and powerful insights into nature and the violence that lives just below the surface of our lives," he said, before braving the chilly streets of Baghdad for a taxi to take him home. The article comes from a British newspaper sent by a colleague in London, in defiance of the intellectual embargo. "We've got to keep our minds alive, somehow. I'm sure the author and The Independent newspaper will forgive

The charming smile speaks volumes for the resilience and resourcefulness of the intellectuals and scholars that have stayed behind and survived in Iraq against enormous odds.

- The Independent

Mel Gibson wants to talk except ... except ... except

By Douglas J. Rowe Associated Press

MEL GIBSON wants to talk about his new movie ... except for the new ending he gave it ... except for making the bad guy he plays smarter ... except for reports of a falling-out with director Brian Hel-

He's glad to talk about the success of his production company ... except be doesn't really like the idea that he's a

movie mogul. Maybe it's the residual effects of being a Mean. Mad Mel in his latest hit, "Payback." Or maybe it's just that he's trying to quit smoking ... again.

In the end, though, he has nothing but praise for Helgeland, who co-wrote "L.A. Confidential." Gibson loves the absurdist feel of the film, which includes Lucy Liu the frosty Ling from TV's 'Ally McBeal") as Pearl, an enthusiastic dominatrix. The movie is a remake of John Booman's 1967 "Point Blank" starring

He also appreciates how Helgeland gave 'Payback' a retro feel, evocative of the late 1960s, early '70s, reminding Gibson of gritty crime-caper, tough-guy movies like "Charley Varrick" and "Dirty Harry." But actor and director had some, uh, artistic differences, as they say in Hol-

Gibson, who plays a character simply named Porter, wanted to add a few points to Porter's SAT score, and he wanted a "clearer" ending because he deemed the original too ambiguous: Porter is shot full of holes and drives off.

"It was flat. I don't like putting out flat movies," Gibson said, flatly. For his part, Helgeland is already work-

ing on another movie and wouldn't give an interview. Gibson also didn't want to talk about the postproduction changes because he

thinks that fuels erroneous reports about rancor between him and Helgeland. "I hate getting into this ... It's like juicy gossip. ... It was all done amicably," he said. Gibson knocked down a tabloid report

that the director was fired. "Well, he wasn't fired. His name's still on it. He saw the end product," he said, "and left his name on it.

"He opted not to do the rewrites and the reshoots, although he was asked to. But he wouldn't because he felt he was compromising his artistic integrity. That's OK. Fine. ...

"His cut was good. And his film is there, essentially.

There's not that much change. It was really peripheral, what we did.

Finally, Gibson harrumphs: "If you want the final cut, get it in your contract like I do. It took me 20 years to earn it, too, by the way." Spoken like a mogul. "Is this what being a mogul feels like? This is really strange. It feels like hard

work to me," says Gihson. This from the man who directed, produced, starred in and marshalled medieval armies for "Braveheart," and cleaned up both at the box office and the

Oscars. Along with his longtime friend,



Mel Gibson doesn't want to be a movie mogul (file photo)

accountant Bruce Davey. Gibson set up Icon Productions in 1988, and their movies include the box-office hit "Maverick," "Immortal Beloved," "Braveheart," "187" and "Fairy Tale — A True Story." Long ago, however, Gibson didn't give much thought to acting, let alone making films and having "final cut." After graduating from high school in Australia, where his family had moved from upstate New York when he was 12, Gibson thought about becoming a chef or a jour-

Then his sister submitted an application for him, without his knowledge, to the National Institute of Dramatic Art at the University of New South Wales. Once he learned of it, he decided to go through with the required audition.

His early films included "Tim" and "Gallipoli." Selected People magazine's Sexiest Man Alive in 1985, he has also starred in the lucrative "Lethal Weapon" and "Mad Max" series, "Ransom" and "Conspiracy Theory." The sixth of 11 children himself ("my father always wanted to own a shoe factory," he jokes). Gibson and wife Robyn have six kids,

and a seventh is due in April. Gibson's commercial successes allow him to tackle artier projects, like his 1993 directing debut, "The Man Without a Face," about a disfigured recluse.

His next film project (as producer and star again) is Wim Wenders' low-budget "The Million-Dollar Hotel." And he has been planning for several years to make another version of Ray Bradbury's science-fiction classic "Fahrenheit 451" but he said that's been pushed back yet again.

"Payback," which had the best opening weekend so far this year, with \$21.4 million in ticket sales, portrays Gibson in typical flawed-hero mode as Poner, the cheated hoodlum out for vengeance.

"Apart from killing people and stealing, he's not a bad guy," the 43-year-old actor said with a glint in his blue eyes.

Porter, admittedly, has a few legitimate gripes: His partner in crime and his wife double-cross him, rob him of \$70,000, shoot him in the back and leave him for

"I think everybody knows what it feels like to want to get even. You're starting from a very good place there."

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Clinton asks Congress to aid Jordan

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton asked Congress on Friday to free up \$200 million in extra U.S. aid to build up Jordan's military and \$100 million to help Amman repay its debts following the death of King Hussein.

"America has a major national interest in helping promote stability in Jordan during the current transition." Clinton said in a letter to Congress.

"Prompt U.S. financial support for Jordan's economy and military requirements is essential to help promote stability in Jordan and the region during this period of transition and help maintain U.S. diplomatic leadership in the Middle East," the president

If approved by the Republican-controlled Congress, the package would give Jordan's Armed Forces \$50 million in the current fiscal year, \$50 million in fiscal 2000, which begins Oct. 1, and \$100 million in 2001 to buy U.S. missiles,warplanes and other weapons.

The package also would provide \$100 million over the next two years to help the Kingdom steer through economic difficulties.

That money would bolster Jordan's foreign exchange reserves. It could be used to repay foreign debts and to cover other budgetary obligations. It also would help the Jordanian government fund water projects.

"All of these efforts will help stabilise the Jordanian economy," said Jack Lew. director of the White House Office of Management and Budget. 'Renewed growth of the Jordanian economy is critical to a smooth transition of leadership."

In Friday's letter, Clinton asked Congress to approve the extra funding by the end of March. The money would come on top of the \$225 million in annual assistance already offered

by Washington. Jordan's economy has slowed sharply over the last three years against the backdrop of a faltering Middle East peace process and turmoil in neighbour-

ing Iraq.
Jordan also is burdened by heavy debt. In the next few years, Amman has obligations to creditors totalling several hundred million dollars. The country

\$300 million to \$400 mil-Clinton said the United States would support a substantial rescheduling of Jordan's debts to bilateral creditors through the Paris Club of creditor nations on

still owes the United States

the basis of an IMF programme The IMF typically plays a leading role in marshalling international financial support for countries in need and in coordinating debt

be saw the trade gap contin-

uing to widen in 1999 amid

slowing growth in western

Europe, patchy recovery in

Asia, and a slowdown in

South America, where the

Brazilian financial crisis is

expected to slow regional

"The dynamics which

bave been driving the

increase in the U.S. deficit in

1998 appear to be continu-

ing," Shapiro told reporters. The deficit last year sur-

passed the 1987 record in

3.3 per cent of GDP, Shapiro

growth.

tary Fund (IMF) said it would speed the pace of negotiations with Jordan on a new three-year loan programme. That agreement would provide Amman with bundreds of millions of dollars in cash so long as authorities pressed ahead with tough economic reforms.

The International Mone-

Jordan's Central Bank Governor Ziyad Fariz said Thursday that broad terms of an IMF accord had been agreed to, but talks would continue on a number of

outstanding issues. IMF officials said they expected the programme to be put to the IMF's board some time in March.

Institute, a liberal think tank.

said the deficit has cost

272,000 manufacturing jobs

since March. It said the

trend is likely to continue in

The steel industry, hit by a

flood of cheap imports last

year, launched a public

awareness campaign and

has filed anti-dumping com-

plaints against a number of

countries. Some members of

Congress bave proposed

legislation to curb steel

The U.S. trade deficit for

manufactured goods rose to

a record \$248 billion in

1998 from \$198 billion in

1997 while the surplus in

services trade fell to \$79 bil-

lion from \$88 billion in

1997, the Commerce

Department said. The Unit-

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U.S. trade gap hits record, seen bigger in '99

expecting a wider \$15.8 bil-

WASHINGTON (R) - The U.S. trade deficit jumped to a record \$168.6 billion last year as the nation's strong economy drew in imports from troubled economies while exports fell, the government said Friday.

The last time the United States chalked up a record trade deficit was in 1987. when the shortfall in goods and services trade hit \$153.3 billion. But economists said that last year's 53 per cent rise from \$110 billion in 1997 was no cause for alarm because it reflected a strong U.S. economy and weakness abroad.

"It was a natural consequence of the turmoil that began in Asia and then emerged in South America." said Mickey Levy, an economisi at Nauonsbank Montgomery Securities in New York. 'we shouldn't be

Imports rose by five per cent last year to \$1.1 trillion.

while exports, which had been rising in recent years. fell by 1.2 per cent to \$931.3

Levy said cheap imports helped keep a lid on inflationary pressures, which in turn kept interest rates lower belped economic growth.

The Labour Department reported Friday that the consumer price index rose a scant 0.1 per cent in January as did the closely watched core index. which strips out volatile food and energy prices. That was below the 0.2 per cent gain for both indices forecast by U.S. economists in a Reuters sur-

Economists said they expect the trade deficit to continue to deteriorate in 1999 even though the monthly gap unexpectedly shrank in December to \$13.79 billion from \$15.26 billion.

Economists had been

lion gap in December and the surprise drop sent economists to revise upward their forecasts for gross domestic product (GDP) during the last three months of the year. The Commerce Department previously reported that GDP expanded by 5.6 per cent and some economists predicted that could be

revised to as much as 6.4 per

cent when the agency reports its final figures next The decline in the monthly trade gap is unlikely to continue into 1999, economists said. Many see a sharp widening of the trade deficit that will lead to a drag on the U.S. economy in the first

"My expectation is that the first quarter trade numbers will be pretty big," said Sung Won Sohn chief economist at Wells Fargo and Co. Undersecretary of Commerce Robert Shapiro said

dollars, but as a percentage of GDP it was much smaller. In 1998, the deficit's share of GDP was 2.1 per cent, while in 1987 it was a record

Even so, the rising deficit is likely to raise concerns in Congress and increase trade tensions between the United States and its trading partners, U.S. officials and economists have said.

The Economic Policy

ed States typically runs a deficit in merchandise trade and a surplus in services

Pakistan faces tough reforms

KARACHI (AFP) — Pakistan has embarked on a programme of structural reforms seen as vital for restoring its economy back to health after the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) resumed lending to Islamabad. The reforms, focused on improving the banking sector and revenue collections, are aimed at achieving five-to-six per cent annual growth, reducing inflation from 10 to six per cent and slashing the budget deficit from 4.3 to 3.3 per cent

of gross domestic product The reforms began after the IMF had approved a \$575 million disbut

in November. The disbursement, aimed at belping the cash-strapped

\$5.5 billion package agreed to

nation straighten out balance of payments problems, was the first since international lending was suspended after Islamabad's nuclear tests in May. Besides the IMF, the World Bank has lent Pakistan \$350 million to support structural

reforms. Analysts said the targets and conditions agreed with the IMF were tough but vital to restoring the country's eco-

nomic health.

In the banking sector the government has to speed up recovery of around 146 billion Revenues have to be

nipees (over \$3 billion) in bad

loans.

increased through a broadbased consumption tax. besides widening the income tax net to cover the undertaxed agricultural sector.

A general sales tax will be extended to services, petroleum products, electricity and agricultural inputs.

The IMF and the World Bank have termed the narrow tax base and "lack of buoyancy" in tax revenues as the main factors undermining Pakistan's efforts to achieve financial sta-

By Glasbergen

Europe's economic woes are worse than feared man and Italian data, also

Europe's two biggest west German business clieconomies are in even worse mate index slipping in Janushape that analysts feared and there is little evidence will recover soon. according to data released Friday.

The German economy contracted by 0.4 per cent in the last three months of 1998, according to Bundesbank data, while French statistics showed industrial output in December shrank 1.6 per cent from the previous

The closely-watched German IFO institute business survey, also published on Friday, offered no signs of a

turnaround, with the key ary to 91.1 from 91.4 in December.

While many economists expected financial crises in Asia and Russia to depress European economies at the end of last year, the scale of the decline in Friday's data came as a surprise.

"That is a big contraction for sure, it's more than I expected," said Adolf Rosenstock, economist at Nomura International, of the German GDP data.

Economists said French production numbers, coming on the back of similar Gerconfirmed the Europe-wide French statistics office also revised down November out-

"The past looks worse than we thought, with a slump in industrial production and...overall we see no clears signs of a robust rebound," said Philippe Brossard, economist at ABN Amro.

So far the conventional wisdom was that resilient consumer confidence and slowly stabilising conditions in export markets would alow Europe's industrial sector to bottom out and get the euro zone back on the growth

Peanuts

HOW CAN YOU

PLAY CARDS WITH A DOG?

Andy Capp

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

Mutt'n'Jeff

WAY DO YOU HAVE SO PEOPLE TO WEAR THAT WILL GET SILLY SIGN? TO KNOW ME!

The European Central year-end slowdown. The Bank seemed to sbare that view, saying in its monthly report that it saw "little evidence" that the weak industrial sector would drag down healthy private consumption.

the IFO index promised little respite soon. The barometer's business conditions and expectations components also slipped in January.

Economists polled by Reuters bad expected the index to stabilise in January after a seven-month slide, in light of more upbeat indicators from the car industry and purchasing managers.

THIS ISN'T A DOG.. THIS IS JOE BLACKJACK, THE FAMOUS RIVER

THIS SIGN GIVES AN

AND IT MAKES

BOAT GAMBLER ..

"It's a disappointing number." said Manuela Preuschl of Deutsche Bank. Some analysts warned

into the IFO survey, saying it might have been skewed by fears of a widespread strike in the German metals and engineering sector. A pay agreement averting the strike was hammered out only on Thursday.

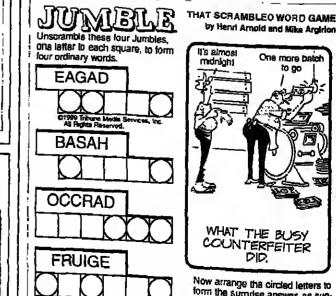
The relatively high wage settlement in the engineering sector yesierday really renders January's survey old news," said Hans Guenter Redeker at Chase Manhattan in London.

HA! I'LL BET HE'S NEVER

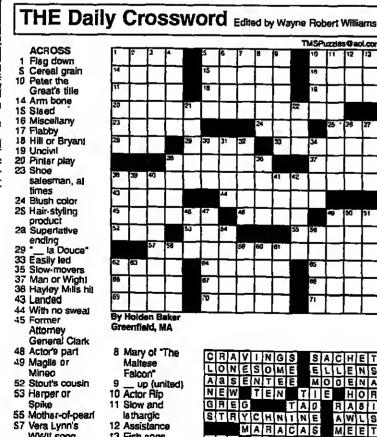
EVEN SEEN A RIVER BOAT!

on disbursement as part of a	recovery of around 146 billion bulb	y.
	THE BETTER HALF.	By Glasberge
HOW ABOUT A STREAM BOAT ?	Company of Annual Profition of pass date towards	GLASBERGEN
	"I'm very happily m miserable, depressing	arried, in a sort of way."





WHAT THE BUSY COUNTERFEITER DID. Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggesled by the above cartoon. Jumbles: SNORT BIPED MISUSE How the gifted ballet student measured her SALOON progress -- BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS



WWII song t3 Fish aggs 21 Round gaske 64 Tropical vine 22 Wedding vow 85 in addition 26 Fashion 30 "Norma ___ 31 Parasitic arachnid 32 Communion 34 Matropolis

67 Graceland man 68 Equal 69 Tenant's 70 Marsh growth 71 Saa sagla DOWN Enargatic drive Hilo hallos Contaminate 4 Shaping 39 Israel's sirline machine

Unexpected hit 6 Sharpen with a

7 __ tha Red

27 Lascivious look 3S High speed Mediocre

41 Golfer Morgan

42 Barcalata's

'Meria

48 House addition

47 Disney classic, 49 Mountain climber 50 Up for the dey 51 Lady of "The Raven

54 Durkhalm or

56 Yawning wide 58 Part of Q.E.D. S9 Roof overhang 60 Oklahoma city 61 Russ news

'Easing poverty, unemployment and supporting productive sectors should benefit from aid'

** COMMENTING ON the pledges of aid from Arab and foreign countries and institutions, a senior planning official said it is very important and will ease a number of problems especially that the aid will be received before the year 2000.

les February Manager

Yusuf Mansur, head of the technical and assistance coordination units at the Ministry of Planning, stressed that the government's drive will focus on productive sectors and the infrastructure as it aims to fight poverty and unemployment and to create new job opportunities and competitivity between products.

"Under all circumstances, the government's measures will be directed to serve and develop the civil society." Mansur said adding that their plans to use the (financial) aid. "There are existing projects that need support, and aid will be directed to them. Furthermore, some sectors suffering from problems will be among the priorities on which aid will be distributed." he

Fakhri Bilbeisi, a board member of the Jordanian Businessmen Association, stressed the importance of using the aid to support productive projects and the infrastructure for new projects with the aim of encouraging local and foreign investments in Jordan. He called also for utilising the aid to support the Social Productivity Package in order to minimise the effects of poverty and unemployment in the society and to contribute in providing training and

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Venus is going into your

sign today, and that ought to be lots of fun. Venus brings good luck as well as love. Jupiter, also for good luck, is in your sign now, too. That's about as good as it gets. To prove

you're intelligent as well as lucky, spend some time planning

how you're going to use these conditions, to benefit others,

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The key to success today is

communication, and for that you are well-aspected. If you can keep the conversation going, all problems can be

resolved, and the whole batch of you will end up much bet-

ier friends than you were before. Make that your intention,

GENIINI: (May 21 to June 21) You're talented as a communicator, and can often find just the right words. Today,

however, words are not what's required. Its more likely a gesture that will best express your thoughts. But how should

you express your feelings if you can't use words? Well, how about a little gift? Flowers would be perfect.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 22) Remember those people you told to drop by sometime? Well, they might actually do

it now, without calling ahead. Even a visit from old friends

could disturb an intimate moment that was brewing. So if there's something private you'd like to talk about with some-

one you love, make a little extra effort to set up the environ-

LEO: (July 23 to August 22) People are in argumentative

moods today, yourself included. A compromise is possible,

but only if people really listen to one another. If you can't get

anybody to do that, you may have to insist on certain rules:

Only one person talks at a time, and everybody gets a turn.

VIRGO: (August 23 to September 22) You've been up to your ears all week long, solving problems and handling dis-

putes. In the upcoming weeks, you'll have more support from your partner, and you ought to use it. Mention your work-related problems briefly if you must, and take suggestions, but then let it drop. Today, devote all your time and

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) The sun is in Pisces and the moon is in Taurus. If you go over your budget today, make sure you scoot some of that money away for yourself.

What does your savings account look like now, anyway? Its

a good day to put more in there. Conditions are excellent for

building towards a strong future.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) People won't hesitate today to tell you how to live your life better, and how

you should go about it. Even more irritating, some of their

comments will be accurate. So don't trust your own enthusiasm fully. You're also going to have to use common sense, and some of that might come from somebody else.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Venus.

symbolising love, is going into Aries today, in your solar fifth

house of romance and games. So this is the perfect day to

play with those you love best. The fifth house also represents children, because romance has a childlike quality. Its new

and fresh and naive and trusts everything. Today, you can be

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) A misunder-

standing about money could lead to a new agreement on how

you and a roommate do business. Talk freely about a difficult subject. so you muly understand each other's positions.

Remember to do it with a smile, especially if your comments are critical. This conversation could make your relationship

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) There's so much to learn, you can't possibly cram it all into your brain in one-

day. It'll take several weeks, at least. Actually, in several weeks, you'll have barely begun, but you'll have mastered a

lew things along the way. And you'll certainly be further

going into Aries, in your solar second house of money and

valuables. Jupiter brings even better luck, and its in there too!

This means wonderful treasures are to be found. However,

Salum, for restrictions and rules, is also in Aries, and there

you have it. If you play by the rules, you could win the big

ahead than you are now, so you'd better get started. PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) Venus, for good luck, is

You'll be amazed at how effective this can be.

attention to the ones you love.

that way, Follow your heart.

much stronger.

and its bound to happen.

reforms

rebabilitation.

Bilbeisi said support and aid can be offered through other forms than financial backing, through opening the opportunities and making jobs available to Jordanians in neighbouring countries. He called for discussing the best means to use the aid and employ it to serve the various sectors of the society through the participation of the private sector in this process. "Such an involvement would entice the private sector to invest and repatriate funds from abroad," Bilbeisi indicated noting that attracting foreign investment depends on the size of local investments.

Akram Karmoul. an industrial expert, emphasised the need to distribute the aid, especially that coming from Arab Gulf countries, on joint projects/investments as they contribute to hiring labour, supporting the dinar and the treasury and maintaining economic stability in

the Kingdom.
"It is not only important to receive the aid in as much as employing various resources and local entities to utilise it in a proper manner such as lowering taxes, especially the sales tax, and facilitating administrative procedures at different departments with the aim of encouraging joint investments," Karmoul

He demanded that productive sectors be supported and strengthened to enable Jordan face the possible effects from trade globalisation (Al Dustour)

Jordan Times

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G-7 sees world economy deteriorating

BONN (R) — Finance ministers of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrial nations admitted Saturday that the outlook for the world economy had deteriorated and pledged to redouble efforts to keep growth on track

At a day-long meeting near Bonn, the ministers voiced serious concern about Russia's economic plight and agreed to keep a closer check on flows of footloose capital to try to nip future financial crises in the bud.

Exchange rates, including a sharp fall recently in the value of the yen, were discussed only briefly, although ministers did reaffirm their determination to avoid excessive swings and significant misalignments in currency markets.

The ministers from the United States, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Canada and Italy said there had been encouraging trends since their last meeting on Oct. 30.

Asia was stabilising after the trauma of recession and financial turmoil, rich-country stock markets had calmed down, the European Union had successfully launched its single currency and interest rate cuts had been cut in the United States, Europe and Japan.

"But financial market conditions have worsened in some regions and the outlook for global economic growth is somewhat less favourable. The impact of financial crises is now felt beyond the regions where do the crises occurred," the ministers said in a communique.

"Against this background, it is of the utmost importance to strengthen in all countries the foundations for sustainable growth of output and employment...," they added.

U.S. officials said the communique's stress on the need for domestic demand-led growth was a victory for Washington's insistence that Japan and Europe must buy more from developing countries desperate to export their way back to economic health.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin said that the outlook for the U.S. economy was favourable, but that Japan and especially Europe needed to boost growth.

"It is very important for the world that Europe get back on track," said Rubin, worried that a big jump in the U.S. trade deficil last year to a record \$169 billion could fan protectionism and create financial problems for America.

"On the question of how, we had a lot of discussion," he told a news conference.

Iapan, by contrast, got off lightly. Finance Minister Kiichi Miyazawa said the rest of the G-7 had made no specific demands.

"The bottom line is they did not say 'do this, do that.' The consensus was that Japan has done what it can and that we could now only await results."

Miyazawa said.

The Tokyo government has gone on a spending spree and the central bank has reduced interest rates close to zero in a hitherto vain attempt to drag the world's second-largest economy out of its deepest recession

in half a century.

The G-7 reserved the most direct language of its communique for Russia, whose de facto default on its foreign debt last summer sent world markets into a dangerous tailspin that

ended only with deep interest rate cuts by the U.S. central bank.

The ministers, who were joined for part of the day by Finance Minister Mikhail Zadomov, said they remained concerned by the economic situation in Russia and its mounting debt arrears.

The seven ministers, who were accompanied by their central bank governors, also instructed global financial regulators to cooperate more closely arkets to head off the sort of market turmoil that is hobbling world

economic growth.

They endorsed a report by German Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer recommending the creation of a new "financial stability forum" to try to prevent a repeat of the crises that have shaken Asia, Russia and Brazil in the past two years.

The forum, made up of officials from existing international bodies, will meet at least twice a year to sound the alarm if it spots worrying trends in global capital flows.

COMMERCIAL VACANCIES IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY

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- supplying market information and sector reports regularly to companies and organisations in the UK
- organising and participating in commercial events
- briefing business visitors

This is a senior representational position and the successful candidate will be confident, educated to University degree standard fluent in Arabic & English (oral and written) and computer literate. He/she will have a good knowledge of business in Jordan, an ability to cultivate business contacts at senior level and a sound appreciation of international trade matters. There is a requirement for regular work outside of normal office hours, travel within Jordan and more occasionally to other countries in the Middle-East and to the UK. Car ownership is desirable (an allowance is payable).

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British Embassy
P.O.Box 87
Amman 11118

CVs should reach the Management Officer by 4 March 1999.
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Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx

Wizards beat Bulls 93-91

NBA roundup

WASHINGTON (AP) -The last time the Chicago Bulls started a season this poorly, Michael Jordan was honing his game in high school.

Mitch Richmond scored in the lane with 17.2 seconds left to lead the Washington Wizards past the Bulls 93-91 Friday night, the seventh loss in eight games this season for defending NBA champions. Chicago has lost six straight, its longest skid this

The Bulls last dropped six in a row while coasting into the 1989 playoffs during Jordan's fifth NBA season.

The Bulls last opened a season 1-7 when the 1978-79 team went 1-10. Calbert Cheaney scored 17 points, Juwan Howard

16 and backup center Ben Wallace had a career-high 13 for the Wizards. Brent Barry scored 22 for

the Bulls, but missed a long shot in the closing seconds.

Raptors 90, Bucks 82

In Toronto, the Toronto Raptors put on a quality performance in their final game at the Skydome, outplaying Milwaukee.

Tracy McGrady had an assortment of high-flying dunks, Dee Brown hit three timely 3-pointers and Doug Christie led all scorers with 20 points for the Raptors, who will move into the new Air Canada Centre on Sunday, The win was just the sec-

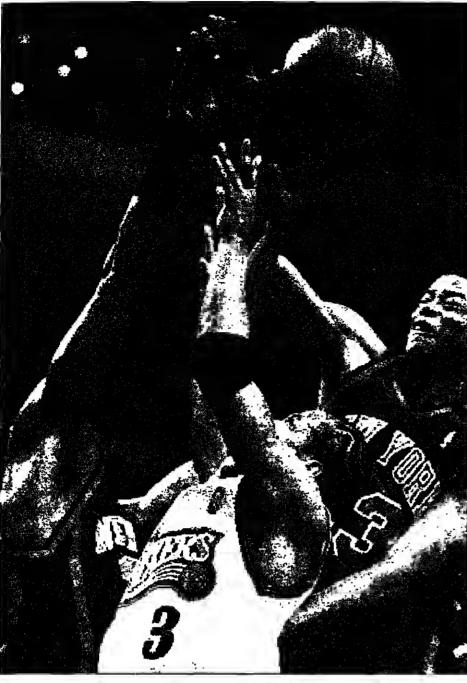
ond of the season for Toronto, which had been playing at Skydome since entering the league in 1995. The victory gave the Raptors a record of 40-77 in

the Cavernous building built for haseball's Toronto Blue Dell Curry led the Bucks

with 17 points while Glenn Rohinson struggled through a 3-for-16 shooting perfor-

Knicks 78, 76ers 67

In Philadelphia, Allan Houston scored 25 points, including five of New York's nine 3-pointers, as the Knicks recovered from their worst loss of the sea-



The Philadelphia 76ers' Allen Iverson (C) finds his way to the basket blocked by the New York Knicks' Patrick Ewing (L) and Marcus Camby (R) Friday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Knicks won 78-67 increasing their record to 5-3 (AFP photo)

son to beat Philadelphia. The Knicks improved to 5-1 without the injured Latrell Sprewell despite committing 23 turnovers one night after a 98-74 blowout loss in Cleveland. It was Philadelphia's worst offensive output ever against New York in 220

Kurt Thomas, forced into the starting lineup hy Sprewell's injury had 14 points. Larry Johnson had 12 points and seven assists, and Patrick Ewing had 11

points and eight rebounds. Matt Geiger was 1-for-8 and scored six points, hear-ing even louder boos than Ewing. Philadelphia . lost forward Tim Thomas, who turned his ankle badly in the fourth quarter and was carried off and taken to a hospital for X-rays, which were

Magic 99, Hawks 94,

defensive play to force over-

In Atlanta, Anfernee Hardaway made a key

time, then hit a clinching jumper with 41 seconds left in the extra period as the Orlando Masic rallied to hand, the Atlanta Hawks their first home loss. Hardaway, who scored 10

points in the first half, managed only one free throw in the last two quarters of regthrough defensively after Horace Grant hit a jumper from the top of the key to even the score at 87 with 14

seconds left.

points, tried to set up for the winning shot, but Hardaway knocked the ball away as the buzzer sounded.

In overtime, Orlando raced ahead by scoring the first seven points, beating the Hawks back down the court for a couple of fastbreak layups hy Darrell Armstrong and Hardaway, sandwiched around a 3pointer by Nick Anderson.

Pistons 101, Suns 93

In Phoenix, Jerry Stackhouse had 23 points and 10 assists as the Detroit Pistons ended their fivegame losing streak with a victory over the Phoenix

Stackhouse had eight points in the fourth quarter, which began in a 71-71 tie. including six in the final 25 seconds.

Grant hill scored 21 points, Jud Buechler and Bison Dele had 16 each, and Lindsey Hunter had 15 for the Pistons. Dele also had 11 rebounds.

Cliff Rohinson had 26 points and Jason Kidd had 24 for the Suns.

Timberwolves 115, Grizzlies 96

In Minneapolis, Stephon Marbury scored 23 points and Joe Smith added 21 as Minnesota Timberwolves beat the Vancouver Grizzlies. The Timberwolves won for the fifth time in six games. Dating back to last year, they have won a teamrecord 10 straight regularseason home games.

Marbury added 10 assists

and outplayed Mike Bibby in a matchup of two of the NBA's best young point

Lakers 106, Spurs 94

In Inglewood, California, Shaquille O'neal had 28 points and 10 rebounds and 10.8 seconds remaining. the golden state Warriors beat the Dallas

Magic's Charles Outlaw (L) on Friday 19 in Atlanta, Georgia (AFP photo)

Atlanta Hawks' Steve Smith (R) drives to the basket while being guarded by Orlando

Mavericks. Antawn Jamison added 12 points and Felton Spencer had 11 for the Warriors. who won their fourth straight win after opening the season with five losses in a row. The winning streak is the longest for golden state since December 1995.

Michael Finley had 19 points to lead Dallas, which has lost seven straight since beating the Warriors in douhle overtime for its only win of the year. Gary Trent added 18 points and Steve Nash had 14.

Kings 106, Harnets 95

Sacramento. California, rookie point guard Jason Williams made season-high 25 points as the Sacramento Kings won their third straight game, defeating the Charlotte

The Homets lost their fifth

Williams jump-started the Kings in the first quarter, connecting on four 3-pointers and 14 points. He finished with 20 in the opening half, helping the Kings to a 63-47 lead.

Blazers 106, Celtics 86

In Portland, Oregon, Brian Grant had 21 points and 18 rebounds as the Portland Trail Blazers coasted over the Boston Celtics. Grant, who had

rebounds Wednesday night against the Denver Nuggets. helped the Blazers dominate outrebounding Boston 52-37. Portland also had a huge edge at the freethrow line, making 32-of-38. Grant was 13-of-14, while the Celtics made just 7-of-

13. Kookie Paul Pierce nad 2. points and reserve center Tony Battie added 16 for the Celtics, who were coming off an exhausting, 131-129 triple-overtime victory at Vancouver Wednesday night.

11 rebounds and Sean Kobe Bryant added 21 Elliott added 20. points as the Los Angeles tery of the San Antonio Mavericks 79 Los Angeles has won six In Oakland, California, John Starks scored 16 straight over the Spurs dating to last season. points, including an elght-Steve Smith, who had 28 Followers of worm watch foot running jumper with World record for George and

Ruddock continues comeback, knocks out Willis in 6th round

VERONA, New York (AP) --Still unbeaten in his boxing comeback, Donovan 'Razor' Ruddock had a smile and a tent to throw jabs and not bloodied left eye after his latest triumph.

We're taking it very slowly." ruddock said Friday night after knocking out Anthony "Big Hand" Willis in the sixth round of their scheduled 10round fight at turning stone casino.

"Be patient. I'm just learning how to fight right now and putting everything together," the 34-year-old Ruddock, slowly working himself back into form after a three-year layoff, won the fight with a flurry of hard left hooks to the body and head of the 234pound Willis, of St. Louis, whose record dropped to 17-9.

It was the fifth straight win for Ruddock since he resumed his career in April. Before his comeback. Ruddock, best known for two bouts in 1991 against Mike Tyson that earned him \$10 million, had not boxed since he lost to Tommy Morrison in June

In the first two rounds, both Ruddock and Willis were conmuch more.

Searching for an opening in the third, the 242-pound Ruddock nailed willis with a hard right hand at 1:20 and a left-right combination a minute later. Willis came on in the closing seconds with a flurry of punches, but they had lit-The fight began to turn in Ruddock's favor in the fourth.

A hard left hook by the Jamaican-born fighter sent Willis to the carryas, but he was able to withstand the onslaught. An accidental head butt one

minute into the fifth round opened a cut over Willis' left eye and forced referee Dick Pakozdi to halt the fight while Willis' comer did some patch-

eight count, he hit Ruddock

with a flurry of punches, opening a nasty cut over his left eye that sent a stream of blood down the side of his face. Ruddock, who early on in

his career was dubbed "Razor" for his cutting jab, ended it with two hard lefts, one to the body and the other to the head, that knocked Willis into the ropes at 2:40 of the sixth. Confusion ensued when Willis turned to walk to his corner and Ruddock charged and hit him with a couple of punches. But Pakozdi stepped between them and stopped the fight. Ruddock said he was

pleased with his performance. "He was tougher than I thought. He was very strong." said Ruddock, who improved to 32-5 with his 25th knockout. any top 10 contenders. I'm not a long way away from that.."

Fredericks sets Allcomers' Mark SYDNEY (AFP) — Emma 9.94 seconds. Frankie Fredericks starred with a world record and an Australian Allcomers' Mark

at a grand prix athletics

meet here on Saturday. Australia's George had only just cleared 4.60 metres at her first attempt to set her 12th outdoor world record before Fredericks left the 100m field in his slipstream with a remarkable time of

Namibia's four-time Olympic silver medallist ran a wind-assisted 9.98secs in his heat, but with the wind at the Sydney International Athletics centre a legal 1.3m in the final, his time shattered

Mark of 9.99secs set here at last year's meet. New Zealander Chris Donaldson was second behind Fredericks in

American Maurice Greene's

10.28secs with Australian David Baxter third in 10.30secs.

were rewarded with a

Dennis Rodman sighting at

the forum. It wasn't clear if

Rodman was there to watch

his former or future team.

He played for the Spurs

before winning three NBA titles with Chicago.

Rodman said earlier Friday

that he may play for the Lakers or Miami this sea-

son. The fans made their

feelings known by shouting

"Rodman! Rodman!" with

O'neal easily topped

Rohinson in a matchup of

two of the NBA's best cen-

tres. Robinson struggled all

game, finishing with 11 points on 3-for-7 shooting and five rebounds in 26

minutes. Tim Duncan led

the Spurs with 26 points and

1 1/2 minutes remaining.

George brushed the bar as she swept over the world record height in the pole vault and, despite a slight wohhle, it remained in position to the delight of the 7.000 crowd.

Her Russian-born rival Tatiana Grigorieva finished second with 4.30m after failing at 4.40m.

George's old world record was 4.59m set in Brisbane

"Obviously last year when Maurice ran 9.99 into a headwind I knew that the track was fast," Fredericks said. 'So I wanted to come here

ready to perform. It proves that if you're in shape and you run on a track that's quite fast and the wind is behind anything possible...When they invited

me I knew that Matt (Shrivington) and Chris were probably in shape that's why I had to get in shape real quick and I started speed work in January." he added.

Fredericks, the winner of the 100m and 200m silver medals at the last two Olympics, said he was now set for next month's world indoor championships in Japan where he is likely to

O'neill set to sign new contract

(AFP) - Martin O'neill has promised to sign a new conmer of 2002.

His signature will be the

England third huge tonic in little neill has more than 48 hours for the Foxes, who clinched a place

> There had been speculation that O'neill would quit

if the thumbs down had been given to moving to a new stadium — a development the former Northern

like contract discussions with roh savage, who has

now signed a new deal, and l am still talking to Rob Ullathorne over a new contract," O'neill said.

ter of trying to get through Wembley in the Worthington Cup. which has been occupying my mind for the last two to three weeks.

"But I am going to sign the new contract and I will repeat what I have said many times before in that there is nothing sinister in me not signing it so far. "I am sure that I will get around to signing it in due course, and there is nothing controversial. Please be assured of that."

tract as Leicester City man-ager. O'neill insisted were then given the go-Saturday that he will put ahead hy city planners for a international "Then was the small mat-"I've been away from the sport believes is vital if the club for a couple of years. What I When the mund resumed, an pen to paper on the deal new 40,000-seater stadium are to progress. want to do is be very, very uppercut hy Ruddock sent "There have been more which would keep him at costing £25 million on a ready before I start taking on Willis down again, But when important things to sort out Filbert street until the sumnearby site. he got back up after a standing

TEL:463-4144 PHILADELPHIA '2' PHILADELPHIA '1' H Bruce Willis .. in

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Shows: 12:15, 3:15, 6:30, 9:45

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Adel Imam, Wafa' Amer &

Kamal Shinawi .. in ALWAD MAHROUS TBA' AL WAZIR Shows: 12:30, 2:30, 8:30, 8:30, 10:30

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MEMPHIS Tennessee Hen Top seed Todd Martin outlasted fellow Gambill 3.6. -5. -6 (9)73 the continue of the Stational APP St. Jude

Second reed Combill on derailed the veterhad for his third Mempher title and faith trip h the finals here. Martin you in 1667 and (652 and love the final in 1993 and

· Ben Sulayem wins UAE International Rally

emphatic victory in the ADNOC FOD UAE International Rally Friday. underlining his determination to capture an 11th Middle East drivers' title.

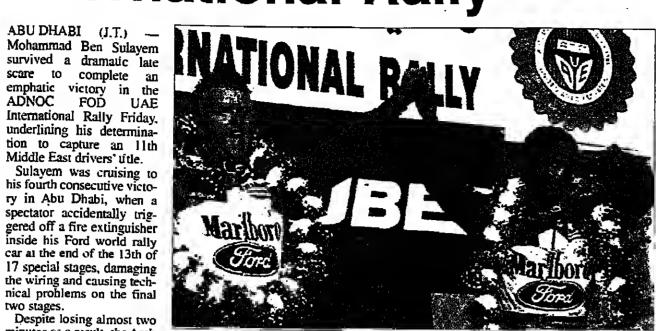
Sulayern was cruising to his fourth consecutive victory in Abu Dhabi, when a spectator accidentally triggered off a fire extinguisher inside his Ford world rally car at the end of the 13th of 17 special stages, damaging the wiring and causing technical problems on the final two stages.

Despite losing almost two minutes as a result, the Arah world's leading driver kept his composure to win by 3 minutes 48 seconds from Rashid Bin Ghurah, who was driving a former Sulayem Ford Escon Cosworth.

Speaking at the finish after clinching his 47th internanonal rally victory, Sulayem said: "If this problem had happened earlier in the rally, we wouldn't be here now. l'm just relieved to get to the finish and start my sea-

son with a victory," Sharjah's Sheikh Abdullah Al Qassimi made a flying start to the defence of his Middle East Group N title by finishing third overall, comfortably winning the category for production cars black flags from their for the second time in Abu Dhabi .

Kuwaiti champion Mohammed Al Sarraf showed his potential as Qassimi's biggest threat in after getting stuck in sand



Ten-time Middle East rally champion Mohammad Ben Sulayem (R) of Dubai celebrates victory with co-driver Ronan Morgan (L) of Ireland, at the Abu Dhabi Rally, Friday. Fellow Emirati Rashed Ben Ghurah came in second, followed by Ahdullah Al Qassimi of Sharjah (AFP photo)

further seven minutes 39 seconds back.

Oman's Nizar Al Shanfari took advantage when Nicolas Mandrides dropped four minutes with engine problems on stage nine to pass the UAE-hased Cypriot driver and finish fifth in a gory for two-wheel drive Mitsubishi Evolution 5.

The battle between the two Jordanian drivers was won by Lee Dunn, who pipped team-mate Faris Bustami to seventh spot in only his third international rally. Both drivers flew Toyota Celicas as a tribute to King Hussein who was a big supporter of rallying in Jordan.

Bustami dropped to ninth the regional Group N title for eight minutes on stage

chase hy finishing fourth, a 12, allowing 1992 Middle East Group N champioo Ron Oakeley to finish eighth.

Britain's Howard Paterson completed a hat-trick of wins in the Formula Two class, finishing tenth overall and leading home the cate-

In a cruel blow, Fiona Mulcahy missed out on winning the ladies' title when her battery failed on the pen-ultimate stage. Held uoder the Patronage

of H.E. Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and organised Automobile and Touring Club for the UAE the ADNOC FOD UAE International Rally was cosponsored by Mina Zayed, Al-Masaood Automobiles,

Taxi Al Ghazal, Abu Dhabi National Hotels Co., Ford, Danka Kodak, GTS Recovery, and the official hotel and rally headquarters, the Abu Dhahi Hilion.

Second day casualties included special stages 14 and 17 which were cancelled owing to deteriorating conditions caused by drivers churning up sand, while the Formula Two hopes of Britain's Amrik Seĥmbi's also N fell vicum to soft sand on stage 11.

Sulayem now takes his Middle FIA Championship bid to Jordan (May 12-14), Cyprus (June 11-13), Lebanon (July 8-11), Qatar (October 8-10), before returning home to Dubai (December 1-3) for

Lajunen leads after ski jumping of Nordic combined event RAMSAU, Austria (AP)

— Samppa Lajunen of Finland took the lead after the ski jumping portion of the nordic combioed event Saturday at the Nordic Ski World

Championship. Lajunen, the Olympic silver medalist last year in Nagano in both the individual and the team events, leaped 98 and 87 meters from the k90 hill to collect 236 points.

That gave him a 15-second advantage over two Russians, Alexei Fadeev and Dmitry Sinitzyn, going into the 15-kilometre cross-country race, the second part of the combined, later Saturday. Olympic Champion Bjarte Engen Vik of Norway was 30 seconds behind and in good posi-tion to win the gold medal.

The two Russians are not fast in the crosscountry race, Vik's stronger point, and Lajunen has been weakened by a stomacb virus that has hit the Finnish

Vik's greatest rival on the world cup circuit, Hannu Manninen, bad to withdraw because of the

Fadeev and Sinitzyn hoth collected 233.5 points. Fadeev had jumps of 92 and 89 meters, Sinitzyn of 93.5 and 90

Vik jumped 95 and 86 metres and had 231 After Friday's snow-

storm, the weather turned milder and rainy Saturday. In a snowstorm, nobody can defeat Mika

The 29-year old finn has a history of triumphs in extreme weather con-ditions, and Friday's vic-tory in 30k freestyle was

no exception. Beating Thomas Alsgaard of Norway in second place by 35.3 seconds and his teammate Bjorn Daehlie by almost

quarter of a minute in the

the World Nordic Skiing Championships Saturday. Lajunen leads the competition after the jumping section of the combined event with 236 points (Reuters photo) opening event of the his victory. Nordic Ski World "I did ver

Samppa Lajunen of Finland flies through the air during the Nordic Combined event at

Championships. Myllylae could even afford to grab the Finnisb flag in the home stretcb and wave to his fans.

With a 35-second advantage, I knew I could always walk to the finish line if it came to the worst," be said.

Snow bas heen falling in Ramsau for several days, a factor which was crucial for Myllylae's decision to take to the

"It was only yesterday morning that I decided to take part in the race," he admitted. "when you see it's the right weather for you, you just have to ski." Originally, Myllylae's main focus on the championships was to he the 50k, an event be won at the nordic worlds in Trondheim, Norway, two years ago.

"After all the bealth problems I had in December and January, I wanted to save energy for my favorite discipline," he said.

20th in Nagano: "I was-On Friday, however, n't in my best form today there was no doubt about but still, I'm quite satis-

"I did very well in the place," second part of the race and on the 28th kilome-

tre, I already knew I would win," he said.
"Today's victory means a lot to me hecause I was fighting against the time for most of the season and my self-confidence was very low,"

Alsgaard also faced health problems throughout the season, qualifying for the worlds only on the strength of his results at the Norwegian Ski Championships. But he seems to be

peaking in Ramsau and his favorite discipline, the 10k classical style race, is yet to come. "This is where I could

win my first individual gold medal bere," the Olympic champion from Lillehammer said. For Daehlie, the 30k

seems to be a jinxed event He last won it at a world cup in oestersund four years ago, finishing second in Trondheim and fied with the third

The Norwegian super-star won his 16th medal at the Nordic Worlds Friday, and remains on course for a podium finish in all five events here. The 30k freestyle turned out to be a disaster for some of the

favourites. The defending champion Alexei Prokurorov of Russia finished 28th, wbile the Russian-horn Austrian Mikhail Botwinov, predicted for a podium finish by Daeblie, came home in a

disappointing 18th. In the women's 15k freestyle race, Stefania Belmondo of Italy ended a six-year gold medal draught at a major event. comfortably beating Estonia's Kristina Smigun in second and the home crowd favourite Maria Theurl in third. "I went without a gold medal for six years so this is a great comeback for me," Belmondo said, adding that her skis were perfectly prepared and

that she enjoyed the

weather conditions.

Henman and Rusedski move one step away from title showdown

ROTTERDAM. Netherlands (AFP) - Top British players Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski moved one step away from a showdown in Sunday's final at the SS50,000 ATP event here Friday when they won their quarter-finals.

The third-seeded Henman saw off sixth-seed Karol Kucera of Slovakia 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) and now faces Marat Safin of Russia.

Safin saw off Wayne Ferreira of South Africa 6-2, 6-7 (5/7). 6-1. "I probably played some of my best tennis this year so far," said Henman, who beat Czech Petr Korda in the previous

"I played a great ne-breaker and I was really patient at the baseline.

The hig-serving Rusedski slammed down 26 aces and held out in a tense and tight clash with Cedric Pioline of France to score a 7-6 (7/5), 3-6, 7-6 (7/5) win. "I couldn't have asked for

anything bettter than to do well

here in Rotterdam," said Rusedski who now plays the second-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia. The Australian Open champion found the going anything but easy but eventually saw off

Federer 6-1, 6-7, 6-1. "I had a good test and passed it today," said Rusedski, adding: "but tomorrow's match is going to be really hard against Kafelnikov who is looking for the number-one spot on the ATP tour rankings."

Switzerland's promising Roger



Briton Tim Henman hammers a ball to Karol Kucera of the Slovak Republic during their match of the \$850,000 ABN-AMRO tennis tournament in Rotterdam, on Friday Henman won 6-4 and 7-6 to advance to the semifinals (AFP photo)

Lahtela, Battelle win World Cup freestyle

MADARAO, Japan (AFP) Nagano Olympics silver medallisi Janne Lahtela of Finland posted his third straight win to take the men's moguls overall ritle in the world cup skiing

freestyle on Saturday. American Ann Battelle. 10th in the Olympics. clinched ber first win of the season in the women's moguls final leg to snatch the seasonal title from world cup points leader Marja Elfman of Sweden.

Lahtela earned the same points from his attemptsas runner-up Thony Hemery of France and Siephane Rochon of Canada, but collected the highest points of all in the air for a total of 26.54 points.

Hemery eoded with 26.51 points, followed hy Rocbon with 26.37 points.

Lahtela, the winner at Blackcomb, Canada, three weeks ago and at Inawashiro Wednesday, collected 100 points for a total of 376 points to finish atop in the men's moguls stand-

compatriot Lauri Lassila, fifth Saturday, was

second with 362 points, fol- isbed with the highest place Margarita Marbler of lowed by American Caleh

Martio with 316 points. Battle, whose highest finish was third in the season opener and fourth three straight times, finally finon the podium with a score of 24.07 points.

Battelle received the best points from her performance in the air, which appeared decisive to beat

Austria into second and Olympic champion Tae Satoya into third.

> It was the final leg of the five-race moguls series.





United Nations Development Programme JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Jordan is inviting interested individuals to submit applications for the position of Procurement Assistant within the Procurement Office of the Rehabilitation Programme of the Electricity Network in Northern Iraq. The successful candidates will be based in Amman, Jordan, but will have to travel regularly to Northern Iraq.

Under the guidance and supervision of the Chief, Procurement Officer, the Procurement Assistant will:

- Ensure full knowledge and systematic application of the procurement and contracting regulations and procedures of UNDP;
- Establish and maintain an up-to-date roster of potential supplies of goods and services in the electricity generation, transmission and distribution
- Support the engineering staff of the programme on all matters related to procurement and contracting;
- Prepare bidding documents, purchase orders, and contracts for goods and services to be procured under the programme in accordance with **UNDP** guidelines;
- Carry out all other relevant procurement and contracting tasks.

Qualifications:

- A graduate degree in Electrical Engineering and/or Business Administration;
- . Minimum five years of experience in the procurement field;
- Familiarity with public procurement procedures;
- Good organizational and procurement skills;
- Complete fluency in English and Arabic.

appear before an interview panel.

All applications should be received in the UNDP Office in Amman (P.O. Box 941631, Amman 11194, Jordan) no later than 11th of March 1999. in an envelope marked "Electricity Network Rehabilitation Programme - Northern Iraq". Short-listed candidates will be expected to sit for a written test and

Martin outlasts Gambill to reach semifinal

MEMPHIS. Tennessee (AFP) - Top seed Todd Martin outlasted fellow American Jan-Michael Gamhill 3-6, 7-5, 7-6 (9/7) to reach the semifinals of the \$700,000 ATP St. Jude

Classic. Seventh seed Gambill nearly derailed the veteran's bid for his third Memphis title and fifth trip to the finals here. Martin won in 1994 and 1995 and lost in the final in 1993 and

Sydney International and reached the Australian Open quarterfinal before a pulled stomach muscle contributed to a straightset loss to Yevgeny

Kafelnikov. Gambill and Martin were teammates in the U.S.' disappointing loss to Italy in Mariano Puerta of last year's Davis Cup, each

falling in singles. Third-seeded Australian Open semifinalist Tommy Haas of Germany also 6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4.

Martin won last month's needed three sets to advance, Aussie Andrew Ilie 7-5, 3-6, 6-3. Haas rose to 10-2 for the season.

Also bidding for the \$120,000 lop prize enlering Saturday's semifinals are American Jim Courier, who ousted sixth seed Argeotina 6-0, 6-2, and Dutchman John Van Lottum, who beat Canadian Daniel Nestor, 3-

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Turkey announces amnesty for rebels as Kurd protests go on

TURKISH PRIME Minister Bulent Ecevit urged Kurdish rebels on Saturday to surrender under a planned partial amnesty, but protests triggered by the arrest of rebel chief Abdullah Ocalan continued across Turkey and

Turkey's old rival Greece tried to generate diplomanc pressure to ensure that Ocalan received a fair trial but Ankara said it wanted to know why Greece had harboured Ocalan for 12 days in its embassy in Kenya before he was snatched by Turkey.

Ankara also began to scale down a military onslaught on the rebels in Iraqi territory, but Ecevit's call for an end to 14 years of bloody rebellion contained no concessions to Kurdish narionalists seeking a negotiated solution.

Nevertheless, it was Ankara's first official gesture to the rebels since Ocalan was captured last Monday.

'I am calling on the young people in the mountains to now put down their weapons and hand themselves in." Ecevit told a news conference. "Lend us your hands and contribute to the development of

have received a boost from Ocalan's detention ahead of an election in April. said he had cross-party support for a law to be passed after the elecnon giving repentant rebels reduced sentences.

But he failed to impress tens of thousands of Kurds who demonstrated in at least 10 cities across Western Europe including London, Paris, Stockholm, Geneva and

The biggest rally was in Bonn, where riot police prevented some 7.000 Kurds from marching to the Israeli embassy to mourn three militant colleagues killed by security guards as they tried to storm the Israeli consulate in Berlin last Tuesday.

In contrast to Tuesday's protests, which included the occupation of more than 20 Greek and Kenyan diplomatic missions across Europe. Saturday's demonstrations were largely limited to chanti-ng and the burning of Turkish

But in Rome some 50 Kurdish militants broke away from the main rally to throw petrol bombs at a Turkish Airlines office, and clashed with police in riot gear. In Turkey itself, the state-

Ecevit, who is certain to run Anatolia news agency said unknown assailants had exploded bombs in Istanbul, thrown petrol bombs at vehicles and smashed shop win-

In a first sign of support for Ocalan, a group of Palestinians on Saturday called for his freedom during a rally in the West Bank town of Jenin.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP). a small PLO faction, said in a statement that the international community must intervene to "preserve the dignity of Ocalan" and assure that he is being treated as a political leader, not a criminal. Palestinians are also estab-

lishing a solidarity committee with Ocalan, said Maher an independent Dasuki, activist. "We are doing this out of

loyalty to one of the most respected symbols of the international liberation movements," said Dasuki. In Athens, Greek Prime Minister Costas Simitis,

under fire for harbouring Ocalan and then losing him to phoned Portuguese and Swedish counterparts to secure their agreement to discuss Ocalan at an EU foreign ministers'

Similis told them he wanted the EU to ensure that Ocalan. being held on an island near Istanbul, would not face the death penalty and that he get a fair trial according to international law, with his own choice of lawyers and the presence of international

But Turkey's foreign ministry urged the European Union (EU) to press Greece to explain why it had helped Ocalan, whom Turkey labels a "terrorist monster" for leading a violent rebellion in which some 29,000 people have died.

"The European Union is under a responsibility to dissuade a member country that openly supported terrorism from this course of action and to hold it accountable," it said.

Turkey seized on its capture of Ocalan last week to launch a military assault on mountain bases of his Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) across the border

On Saturday it said some 4,000 Turkish troops had been pulled back from the mountainous region, while others were still searching for rebels. A military official said around 10 rebels had been killed in the operation.



A demonstrator Saturday launches a stone at Italian riot police and paramilitary carabinieri agents guarding the Turkish airlines office in Rome. Demonstrators covering their faces with full-face riding helmets, facemasks and brandishing sticks protested against the arrest of Ocalan. Reports said the demonstrators launched incendiary devices at the Turkish airlines office (AP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Date for Palestinian state open'

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt said Saturday that declaring an independent Palestinian state was at the heart of discussions between Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. "The date of the declaration is still open for discussion," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters, adding that "several factors, including the [May] Israeli elections could have an effect" on the decision, "Without a Palestinian state, peace will be incomplete," Musa said, adding that Israeli opposition to Palestinian independence was "unacceptable." Asked about Arafat's proposal for a Palestinian confederation with Jordan, Musa said that the idea of confederation "demands two equal entities - in other words two states."

'Iran refuses visa to Carter's son'

TEHRAN (R) — Iran has denied an entry visa to James Carter, son of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who had planned a friendly visit to the Islamic Republic, the Iranian News Agency (IRNA) reported on Saturday. It quoted an unnamed foreign ministry official as saying the visa had been refused because of "James Carter's past record." The official did not elaborate. Iranian press reports have said Carter had planned an unofficial visit to establish friendly relations between the peoples of Iran and the

Six Iraqi children injured by shell

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Six Iraqi children were injured by a shell left over from the Gulf War eight years ago, the official INA news agency said Saturday. The tragedy took place in the town of Diwaniya to the south of Bagbdad, the agency said. INA on Wednesday said Iraqi civil defence workers had defused several cluster bombs dropped by U.S. or British warplanes on the south of the country.

Eritrea 'prepared' to honour ceasefire

ASMARA (AFP) - Eritrea is "prepared" to honour a ceasefire with Ethiopia and wants international observers to deploy along the two countries' disputed border, an Eritrean official said Saturday. "We are prepared to observe a ceasefire. We call for a binding agreement on a ceasefire that provides for the placement of observers along the border." said Yemane Gbebremeskel, an aide to Eritrean President Issaias Afeworki. Earlier Saturday. European Union mediators failed to obtain a ceasefire agreement in the border war, the head of the delegation said Saturday. "Unfortunately, the answers that we were given by our interlocutors as to their willingness to agree to an immediate ceasefire were not satisfactory," German Deputy Foreign Minister Ludger Volmer said. Speaking to reporters. Volmer repeated the EU's position advocating acceptance of an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) peace plan.

Greek police seize ancient statue

THESSALONIKI (R) - Greek police on Saturday seized a valuable marble statue, dating from the second or third century BC, from two men trying to sell it illegally. The police, in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki, said the pair were asking 40 million drachmas (\$140,000) for the statue of a young man holding an eagle to his chest. Undercover agents posing as buyers arrested them. They said the men, a father and son, must have come across the statue, which archaeologists said was of great historical and commercial value, during construction work when they uncovered an ancient grave.

11 die in Algerian house collapse

ALGIERS (AFP) - Eleven people were killed when a truck carrying construction equipment hit a building in Chaaba, south of Algiers, causing the building to collapse, authorities said Saturday. Five people were seriously injured in the accident Friday evening, apparently caused when the truck's brakes failed, the radio quoted authorities

Iran smashes counterfeit dollar ring

TEHRAN (R) - Iranian authorities have arrested several African nationals on charges of smuggling millions of counterfeit dollars into the country, the official Iranian News Agency IRNA reported Saturday. The suspects, whose identities or countries of origin were not revealed. went on a shopping spree in Iran using several million dollars in fake bills, it said. The agency did not give further

Iran says German's death sentence overturned

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's supreme court has overturned the death sentence against German businessman Helmut Hofer for having illicit sex with an Iranian Muslim woman and ordered a retrial, a official said

"Iran's supreme court has quashed the earlier court ruling against German businessman Helmut Hofer and sent his case to the Tehran justice department for a retrial," said judiciary spokesman Fotovat Nassiri Savadkuhi, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA.

"Deciding about Hofer's freedom will be up to the judge in charge of the next trial of the case." Nassiri Savadkuhi said.

IRNA's newspaper Iran reported earlier that the supreme court had overturned the death sentence because "there was not enough evi-

dence" and ordered a new In Bonn, a German foreign

ministry spokesman said the German government was aware of the decision. ministry

The foreign spokesman said, however, it was too early to assess what this would mean for Hofer because German officials had not yet read the court's verdict and therefore did not know the reasons given for the decision.

The spokesman said the supreme court had ordered a retrial in a court directly below it in Iran's judicial hierarchy. It was not clear when this would

Hofer was sentenced to death last year after being found guilty of having sex with a 27-year-old unmarried medical student. The ruling had been upheld by an appeals court in October.

non-Muslim man can face denied the charges.

execution if convicted of having sex out of wedlock with a Muslim woman. The woman was sentenced

to 99 lashes, a ruling also on apoeal. Hofer, who was born in 1941, has said he converted to Islam some years ago when he married a Turkish national.

The businessman from Hamburg is now divorced. The case has been a source of tension between Iran and Germany, a major trading partner of the Islamic repub-

Bonn has made it clear that relations with Tehran would worsen considerably if Tehran executes Hofer.

Ties between the two countries have improved after a 1997 row sparked by a German court ruling that Iranian leaders had ordered rourt in October. the 1992 killings of Kurdish Under Iran's Islamic laws a dissidents in Berlin. Iran

Saddam says Iraq ready to • turn page in Arab relations "If there is a will to move the BAGHDAD (AFP) - Iraqi But he asked Abdul Meguid

President Saddam Hussein said Saturday he was ready to "start a fresh page" in his relations with other Arab states if they were willing to adopt a joint position on the Iraq issue.

"If we want, we can start a fresh page in Arab relations by adopting a common stand on the aggression and the sanctions against Iraq and on all the Arab issues." he said in a letter to Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid, a copy of which has been seen by AFP.

He said one Arab state should condemn aggression against another "regardless of the policies" of the state attacked.

"A clear stance [by Arab states] on the aggression against Iraq is Iraq's night, and a duty for the Arab League," the letter

Saddam said his country was ready on that basis to take part in "any meeting" dealing with improving relations between Arab states.

to postpone a meeting of the Arab follow-up committee charged with working for an end to sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 occupation of He said an Arab reconcilia-

tion meeting should be held Abdul Meguid called last Sunday for an urgent meeting

of the follow-up committee. established by a meeting of Arab League foreign ministers in Cairo on Jan. 24. Meanwhile Iraqi Foreign

Minister Mohammad Said Sahhaf, who is visiting Syria as part of a regional tour to discuss the Iraqi situation, also expressed concern about the committee.

within the follow-up committee," he told journalists, "It is better to continue our contacts in order to avoid errors that could damage everyone, and lraq in particular."

question of Iraq forward, then the opinion of that country needs to be taken into consideration." Sahhaf said, after a meeting with his Syrian counterpart Faroug Shara. The follow-up committee is

chaired by Syria, its members include Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Sahhaf arrived in Syria Friday on the latest leg of a tour that has already taken him to Algeria Libya, Mauritania. Morceco. Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.

Yemeni officials say Sahhaf told them Iraq would stop its verbal attacks on other Arab countries, in particular Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The January meeting of the called on Baghdad to stop provoking its neighbours and to take concrete steps to prove its good intentions towards Kuwait and other neighbouring coun-

Disarmament panel meets next week to resume Iraq work

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — A nanel of weapons experts from around the world will meet at U.N. headquarters next week to begin the lengthy process of trying to resume disarmament work in Iraq after a near six-month hiatus.

Diplomats said Friday they expect the meeting, which begins Tuesday, to focus on assessing the state of the eight-year U.N. effort to rid Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. The first session could last through Saturday.

A recommendation by panellists on how to continue the disarmament work is due by

Regardless of the panel's recommendation to the

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The pre-

served brain of Ishi, an American

Indian known as "the last wild man

in America." has been found in a

Smithsonian Institution warehouse

more than eight decades after it

Methodical sleuthing by a pair of

academics solved a mystery that

may finally permit a proper burial

of the last survivor of the Yahi

The discovery, revealed Friday

by the University of California at

San Francisco, has electrified

northern California tribes who

struggled for years to locate Ishi's

"To put Ishi back together, to get

his remains back will be something

that people will feel good about,"

said Larry Myer, director of the

state's Native American Heritage

"It will give us a sense of healing,

Indian tribe.

remains.

Commission.

Security Council, however, it remains to be seen how any the biological field — before disarmament work can con-

Iraq has said it won't allow U.N. inspections in the wake of U.S. and British airstrikes in December. The bombings followed a report that Baghdad had not fully cooperated with the inspectors.

U.N. experts must report to the Security Council that Iraq is disarmed before the oil embargo imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 can be lifted.

Iraq says it is disarmed and has demanded the embargo be lifted immediately. U.N. weapons inspectors say Iraq still has to provide more infor-

a sense of control."

tlers or disease.

tuberculosis in 1916.

In 1911, Ishi wandered out of the

foothills of the Sierra Nevada and

into American legend. He had been

hiding in the wilderness for years

after the last of the Yahi were

thought to have been killed by set-

He became a nationwide sensa-

tion as a living example of "the last

wild man in America." Ishi lived in

a museum at UCSF, giving demon-

strations of American Indian life

for throngs of visitors. He died of

An autopsy was performed —

against Ishi's final wishes - and

his brain was removed. But scien-

tists lost track of the brain, and

Indian leaders refused to go

through with a burial ceremony

without it. Ishi's body was cremat-

ed and his ashes are stored in a

cemetery in Colma, south of San

they can give Baghdad a clean bill of health.

Last month, the council agreed to create the disarmament panel - and others on humanitarian problems in Iraq and Kuwait-related issues - as a first step to breaking the diplomatic impasse that followed the airstrikes.

Iraq curtailed cooperation with U.N. weapons inspectors in August and severed it altogether in October.

On Friday, Brazilian Ambassador Celso Amorim. who is chairing all three panels, met with members of the humanitarian panel to discuss mation about its weapons pro- how it would carry out its

Long-lost brain of 'last wild man in America'

found at Smithsonian Institution

work, which is slated to begin in the first week or two of March, diplomats said.

The diplomats stressed that next week's meetings on disarmament would be technical - not political - in nature, relying on presentations of what has been learned about lraq's biological, chemical and nuclear weapons and the long-range missiles used to deliver them.

Debates in the Security Council about the state of Iraq's disarmament have largely degenerated into political disputes.

Iraqi sympathisers Russia, France and China argue that Baghdad has largely complied with disarmament resolutions and should be granted er.

Two years ago, administrators at

UCSF asked historian Nancy

Rockafellar to determine whether

She learned that Duke University

anthropologist Orin Starn was

researching a book on Ishi and told

Starn found a file at the University of California at

Berkeley that catalogued the trans-

fer of Ishi's brain to the

Last month, Starn confirmed the

brain was being kept in a tank in

Maryland by the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural

History. It is one of nine American

Indian brains and thousands of

"It was not uncommon to study

brains in the early 20th century."

Starn said. Some people thought

that different races had different

skeletons collected for research.

the brain was at the university.

him about the autopsy.

Smithsotian.

relief from the embargo. The United States and Britain take a harder line, echoing the inspectors' assessment that Iraq needs to produce more information.

Among the disarmament panellists are several commissioners and staff members of the U.N. Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which have carried out weapons inspections and monitoring in Iraq. Outside experts are also included.

Absent will be chief weapons inspector Richard Butler, the controversial UNSCOM chief. His deputy, Charles Duelfer of the United States, is on the panel, howev-

A Smithsonian spokesman said

Friday that the institution has been

in touch with tribes in California's

Butte County to discuss repatria-

Stam said he didn't think there

any "bad intent" on the part of the

institution, which apparently didn't

know people were seeking the

"I think Ishi is important as a

symbol a reminder of what hap-

pened to indigenous people during

the white takeover and conquest."

Starn said. "He really was a victim

As the place where Ishi lived his

"He captures your imagination."

she said. "His basic humanness is

what shines through in these

accounts of him left by the whites

who knew him, his humanness and

final years, Rockafellar said UCSF

has an obligation to his memory.

remains,

of a Holocaust,"

his resiliency."

League Israel, Turkey .

CAIRO (AFP) -The Arab League issued a sharp condemnation of Israel on Saturday over its takeover of a village in south Lebanon, and also assailed Turkey for its incursion into northern Iraq.

ly condenins Israel's annexation of this village, which represents a new aggressive action against Lebanon and a violation of international law," said the league's deputy secretary general for political affairs, Mohammad Zakareya Ismail. Israel and its South Lebanon

condemned the Turkish incursion into northern Iraq as an "aggression against the sovereignty" of an Arab state and

league member. No matter what the justifications of the Turkish government, such military operations are unacceptable and are not in line with the policy of good neighbourliness that the Arahs want to see Turkey following. he said.

Arab condemns

Finnish woman shoots three dead at shooting range HELINKI WIT - An manning of the start should

The Arab League vigorous-

Army (SLA) allies incoporated the village of Amoun into the Israeli-occupied "security zone in south Lebanon overnight Wednesday.

Ismail called on the U.N. Security Council and the international community to pressure Israel to rescind the action. saying it showed that Israeli, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu had "lied" when he said he wanted to withdraw his troops from south Lebanon.

Ismail also said the league

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when the said is becauting

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